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ABSTRACT

The Miscellaneous Divisions of the proceedings contains the following 17 papers: "Analyzing Sequential Art: Visual Narrative Techniques in 'Calvin and Hobbes'" (Sharron M. Hope); "A Critical Vision of Gender in 2002 Campaign Ads" (Janis Teruggi Page); "Personal Impact Assessment of Advertising Culture of 'Whiteness': Facial Skin Color Preferences among Urban Chinese Women" (Angela K. Y. Mak); "Immersive 360-Degree Panoramic Video Environments: Research on 'User-Directed News' Applications" (Larry Pryor, Susanna Gardner, Albert A. Rizzo, and Kambiz Ghahremani); "Convergence and Writing Instruction: Interviews with Journalism Faculty Members about Curriculum Decisions" (David W. Bulla and Julie E. Dodd); "Pinpointing Predictors of Print Media Career Consideration: An Assessment of the Role of Writing Self-Efficacy Student Values and High School Media Experience" (George L. Daniels); "Characteristics of Journalistic Media and Journalism Educators in Inner-City High Schools" (Jack Dvorak and Candace Perkins Bowen); "September 11, 2001: How Yearbook Journalists Covered a National Tragedy" (Melanie Wilderman and Laura Schaub); "The Communication Needs and Behavior of Iowa Apple Growers and Apple Cider Producers" (Andrew Zehr); "An Application of Message Sidedness: Encouraging Undergraduate Participation in Internship Programs" (JoAnn L. Roznowski and Brenda J. Wrigley); "A Public Journalism Model for the Middle East and North Africa: Effectiveness of Media-NGO Relationships in Partial Autocracies" (David C. Coulson and Leonard Ray Teel); "Exploring Radio Public Service as Civic Journalism" (Tony R. Demars); "When Schools Fail to Act Ethically: The Vital Role of Civic Journalism" (Janis Teruggi Page); "Civic Journalism and Objectivity: A Philosophical Resuscitation" (Hendrik Overduin); "Elite and Non-Elite Sourcing in Civic and Traditional Journalism News Projects" (Jennifer Roush); "The Portrayal of People with Disabilities in Prime-Time Japanese TV Dramas from 1993 to 2002" (Shinichi Saito and Reiko Ishiyama); "Running with Ritalin: Magazine Portrayals of Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder" (Tiffany S. Johnson and Bryan E. Denham); "Promoting Disability-Friendly Campuses to Prospective Students: An Analysis

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RUNNING HEAD: Sequential Art

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Analyzing Sequential Art:

Visual Narrative Techniques in *Calvin and Hobbes*

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Abstract

Comics and comic strips are two examples of a unique art form best described as "sequential art," a rarely studied but important cultural phenomenon whose usefulness as a communication tool is underestimated. As a means to better appreciate and apply this art form, this paper examines the history of newspaper comics, then uses several Sunday *Calvin and Hobbes* comic strips to identify four visual elements that contribute to an effective sequential art narrative.

Analyzing Sequential Art: Visual Narrative Techniques in *Calvin and Hobbes*

The idea of a scholarly investigation into the comics might strike some as peculiar, if not a frivolous waste of time and effort. However, in his book *Picture Theory*, W.J.T. Mitchell calls for "a critique of visual culture that is alert to the power of images for good and evil and that is capable of discriminating the variety and historical specificity of their uses" (p. 3). This paper is an attempt at such an examination of a piece of popular visual culture: the comics, a.k.a. "sequential art."

Sequential art has been defined as "juxtaposed pictorial and other images in deliberate sequence, intended to convey information and/or to produce an aesthetic response in the viewer" (McCloud, 1993, p. 9). While this method of expression is employed most often in comic books and comic strips, as a medium there is no limitation on content or subject matter or requirement for dialogue within the frame. As an example, graphic novels – full-length books dealing with serious subjects – are beginning to appear. The graphic novel *MAUS* by Art Spiegelman, which addresses the Holocaust and its survivors, won a Pulitzer Prize in 1992. However, comic books and graphic novels are different enough applications of sequential art to deserve separate treatment elsewhere. This paper will discuss sequential art as it applies only to comic strips appearing in the newspapers. The comic strip is characterized by "narrative by sequence of pictures, continuing characters from one sequence to the next, and the inclusion of dialogue within the picture" (Berger, 1973, p. 35).

Given this definition, the single panel cartoon is also excluded from this discussion. Even though a single panel may share certain elements with a comic strip, the lack of a series of images removes it from the category of sequential art. However, both sequential art and the single frame cartoon often employ the style of drawing referred as cartooning. Creators of comic strips, comic books and other sequential art are most often called cartoonists. With talents as authors, humorists, writers, editors, designers, drawers, and artists, these people create a little bit of joy for millions of people every day through their comic strips.

The popularity, influence and communication potential of comics make the study of this form of sequential art important work. According to media scholar Arthur Asa Berger, the comic strip as a form of mass culture is an important ingredient of the daily newspapers (1973). Author Fielding Dawson noted that the comic strip has "for a century commented on the way we see and view ourselves as it has fulfilled its daily appointed task of amusement and distraction" (Phelps, 2001, p. xi).

Reading the comics is an American habit. In a survey conducted in 2000, Scarborough Research reported that 55 percent of the adult U.S. population were weekday readers of newspapers, while 65 percent were Sunday readers. Newspapers reach more people than television: the daily newspaper reaches a higher percentage of U.S. adults than the average half hour of prime time network and cable television combined. The Newspaper Association of America reports daily U.S. newspaper circulation at over 55 million with an average of 2.2 readers per copy. Sunday circulation stands at nearly 60 million with an average of 2.4 readers per copy. Of those who read the daily paper, 59 percent, or 32.4 million, regularly read the comics (Scarborough Research from www.naa.org). For comparison, "ER," the highest rated TV program the week of April 15-21, 2002, reached approximately 16.7 million homes (Nielsen Media Research).

With the lack of sound and motion, comic strips do not have the psychological impact of television. However, "numerous studies have demonstrated that comics do play an important role in the lives of the people who read them – as sources of diversion, escapism, and information about life" (Berger, 1973, p. 6). In providing "information about life," the comics, like other mass media products, hold a mirror to the foibles of American society. This reflection role is important in understanding the popularity of the comic strip, and in examining it critically. As Berger noted:

> Relevance is everything to contemporary mass culture criticism. For something to be popular, it must deal with themes that are meaningful to large numbers of people. That is why conventions in the various popular art forms are important. If we accept the hypothesis that our popular arts mirror our cultures, that somehow they are tied to our concerns and based upon widespread assumptions, then the study of our popular culture becomes an important means of understanding our society. To the extent that some of our comic strips appeal to the mythical lowest common denominator, so much the better for social scientists who want to know something about the mythical common man who is a big part of this "lowest common denominator" (1973, p. 6).

The reason to examine sequential art is the same one given by those who study other art and literature forms: to promote understanding that sharpens perception and awareness, leading to a deeper appreciation and further application of the medium. To accomplish that goal, an understanding of the roots of the art form is necessary. Thus this paper traces the development of the comics from its first appearance in American newspapers into the form recognized today as sequential art. It identifies four visual elements that serve narrative and rhetorical functions and considers their use in the Sunday *Calvin and Hobbes* comic strips of Bill Watterson.

Methodology

In order to explain the development and foundations of this medium, the history of comics, the process of iconic representation, and design techniques used to create sequential art were investigated. Numerous books on art, comics, sequential art, cartoonists, rhetoric and media theory, journal articles, online sources, and collections of comic strips were consulted in order to enlighten readers on the complexities of this underutilized communication medium.

The focus of this study is how sequential art techniques are employed in the Sunday comics, to communicate narratively and rhetorically. The Sunday, rather than daily, strip was selected for examination because the longer format permits a richer variety of construction techniques. The Sunday strips chosen are from five collections of Bill Watterson's *Calvin and Hobbes*, a very popular strip that ran from 1985 through 1995. This choice was made for several reasons.

First, its popularity made it an important part of American culture. When Watterson retired from cartooning at the end of 1995, *Calvin and Hobbes* was appearing in over 2,400 newspapers. Book collections of the strips have become bestsellers, even several years after the strip ceased publication. Second, the strip is a finite rather than ongoing body of work. Since *Calvin and Hobbes* will not be changing into something else, it is a practical choice for analysis. A third reason is that the strip won critical acclaim as well as the popular vote. In 1986, creator Bill Watterson won the prestigious Reuben Award for "Outstanding Cartoonist of the Year" from the National Cartoonists Society, the youngest person ever to do so. He won the award again in 1988, and was nominated for the honor in 1992. The final and most important reason is the opportunity for comparative analysis offered by the *Calvin and Hobbes* Sunday strips. During the latter part of his cartooning career, Watterson was able to escape from the confines of the traditional Sunday strip format and explore new ways of presenting his narrative visually (Watterson, 1996). This allows a comparison of "before" and "after" strip formats that showcases specific design devices. Before discussing the elements of design and turning to the analysis, let us first consider the American foundations of comics and cartooning that ultimately resulted in *Calvin and Hobbes*.

The Comic Strip in America

The first U.S. comics appeared in papers in New York in the late 1800s. Toward the end of that century, when newspapers were alone as the great mass medium, metropolitan papers competed hotly for readers. To increase circulation, Joseph Pulitzer decided to publish a Sunday edition of his *World*, with extravagant supplements for practically every demographic. The first regular Sunday comic section was published by Pulitzer in 1889. The *Sunday World* was so successful, other papers followed suit and published similar editions. When the *World* installed a new four-color rotary press in 1894, the Sunday comics began appearing in color. The tradition continues in the 21st century.

Among the artists on the *Sunday World* staff was Richard F. Outcault, whose drawings provided commentary on the slums of the city. One character stood out: a child with a bald head, enormous ears, and an Oriental face that stared straight out at the audience. He wore a long nightshirt on which Outcault would print a comment on the scene happening in the drawing. On January 5, 1896, printers testing a new yellow ink colored the kid's shirt, and soon after the Yellow Kid and *Hogan's Alley* were regular fixtures in the *Sunday World* (Berger, 1973; Harvey, 1994; Waugh, 1947).

The Yellow Kid rose quickly from guttersnipe to star. He became the first merchandised comic character, appearing on buttons, ladies' fans and other souvenir objects (Harvey, 1994). His popularity was a distinct threat to the success of William Randolph Hearst's *Morning Journal*, and Hearst coveted the Yellow Kid. The publisher persuaded Outcault to move to his newspaper, but Pulitzer hired another cartoonist to draw *Hogan's Alley*, with the Yellow Kid, for the *Sunday World*. At one time, both papers ran versions of the Yellow Kid.

The circulation war between the two papers was fierce. Luring the reader away from the opposition was more important than providing the reader with accurate information. To attract readers and build circulation, "journalism became a shrieking, gaudy, sensation-mongering enterprise, distorting facts to provide howling newsboys with whatever hawked best" (Harvey, 1994, p. 6). The Yellow Kid became the symbol for the circulation wars. People began calling the two papers "the Yellow Kid journals" or "yellow journals," and the sensational style of journalism they practiced was called "yellow journalism" (Berger, 1973; Harvey, 1994; Waugh, 1947). This connection to the unsavory side of the journalism business was unfortunate for the young medium of comics:

> That the first character of American comics should have his chromatic signature appropriated by a journalistic movement was ample testimony to the power and popularity of the comics. But because that movement was wholly commercial, embodying reprehensible ethics and sensational appeals to baser emotions, the new art form was associated with only the lower orders of rational endeavor – a circumstance that cast a shadow for a long time over any claims made for artistic merit and intellectual content in the funnies (Harvey, 1994, p. 6).

The bottom line: comics sold papers. In the intensely competitive newspaper business at the turn of the nineteenth century until about the 1950s, "the funnies were an active ingredient in a newspaper's circulation-building strategy" (Harvey, 1993, p. 7). As the news began to come from newswire services and stories in the papers became more and more similar, the features were the main thing that distinguished one paper from all the others – and the most conspicuous feature was the comics (Berger, 1973; Harvey, 1994).

"From the very beginning, the Sunday funnies, masquerading as entertainment for children, entertained the grown-ups, too" (Harvey, 1994, p. 7). Many of the drawings were one large picture with a great deal of language and action, rather than a sequence of drawings that has become the accepted standard. Today's format first appeared on December 12, 1897, in Rudolph Dirks' "Katzenjammer Kids" (Berger, 1973; Harvey, 1994; Waugh, 1947). While the dialogue in this strip first occurred below the drawing, in time the text appeared in the picture frame, thus combining the essential ingredients of the comic strip: "narrative by sequence of pictures, continuing characters from one sequence to the next, and the inclusion of dialogue within the picture" (Berger, 1973, p. 35). The narrative by sequence of pictures classifies comics as sequential art. The continuing cartoon characters and speech balloons within the frame turn the sequential art into comics.

The Medium of Sequential Art

In order to understand the comics, it is important to understand both the unique language of sequential art and the design elements involved. This understanding begins with a renewed focus on the visual or "pictorial turn." Richard Rorty used the term "turn" to section the history of philosophy. According to Rorty, a turn occurs when "a new set of problems emerges and the old ones begin to fade away" (Mitchell, 1994, p. 11). Thus ancient and medieval philosophy considered *things* while the seventeenth through nineteenth century thinkers cogitated on *ideas*. Recent philosophy has been focused on *language*, a "linguistic turn" that guides critical thinking in intellectual and academic circles.

In his book *Picture Theory*, W.J.T. Mitchell (1994) claims that philosophers, scientists and scholars are now shifting focus from linguistic to visual representation, and thus a *pictorial turn* has begun.

> What makes for the sense of a pictorial turn, then, is not that we have some powerful account of visual representation that is dictating the terms of cultural theory, but that pictures form a point of peculiar friction and discomfort across a broad range of intellectual inquiry. . . .We still do not know exactly what pictures are, what their relation to language is, how they operate on observers and on the world, how their history is to be understood, and what is to be done with or about them" (Mitchell, 1994, p.11).

One place to begin to learn what pictures are and how they relate to spoken language is to study the iconic language comics. All great comics have in common the basics of the comic strip that Waugh noted in 1947:

1. a continuing character who becomes the reader's dear friend;
2. a sequence of pictures, which may be funning or thrilling, complete in themselves or part of a longer story;
3. speech in the drawing, usually in blocks of lettering surrounded by "balloon" lines (p. 14).

While these are the elements that characterize the comic strip, the definition of sequential art does not impose limitations on subject matter or the need for speech. McCloud uses the definition of "juxtaposed pictorial and other images in deliberate sequence, intended to convey information and/or to produce an aesthetic response in the viewer" (1993, p. 9). Using this broader definition, sequential art appears in Egyptian pyramid hieroglyphics, stained glass windows that show Biblical stories in sequence, in safety information on airplanes, in car owners' manuals, in serial paintings that tell a story as well as in comics (McCloud, 1993). Discussion will focus on sequential art as used in the Sunday comic strip, since its longer format allows a richer variety of construction techniques than the smaller daily strip.

Comics weave words and pictures together to achieve a narrative purpose in a way that no other graphic art does. "Comics employ the techniques of both the literary and the graphic arts, yet they are neither wholly verbal in their function nor exclusively pictorial" (Harvey, 1994, p. 8). Sequential art is more than a simple coupling of the verbal and the visual, but a true blend in that the final product is greater than the sum of its parts (Harvey, 1994; McCloud, 1993) Harvey (1994) considers this interdependence between the visual and verbal to be the first principle of a critical theory of the comics. Thus, "a measure of a comic strip's excellence is the extent to which the sense of the words is dependent on the pictures and vice versa. . . .Great comics will be those that tell affecting and powerful stories…by exploiting to the fullest the unique potential of the art" (Harvey, 1994, p. 9).

Other authors claim the work of the sequential artist must be measured by comprehensibility (Eisner, 1985) based on the unique language of the comics, that of the icon (Eiser, 1985; McCloud, 1993). Cartoon images are visual representations of people and objects, what Stuart Hall refers to as "visual signs or iconic signs. That is, they bear, in their form, a certain resemblance to the object, person or event to which they refer" (Hall, 1997, p. 19). Some cartoons are more realistic in their rendering than others, but

> visual signs and images, even when they bear a close resemblance to the things to which they refer, are still signs: they carry meaning and thus have to be interpreted. . . . Even in the case of visual language, where the relationship between the concept and the sign seems fairly straightforward, the matter is far from simple (Hall, 1997, p. 19).

The simplified representation of the icon can be considered the language of comics. Icons can be thought of as amplification through simplification: "By stripping down an image to its essential 'meaning,' an artist can amplify that meaning in a way that realistic art can't" (McCloud, 1993, p. 30). When unnecessary details are removed, the reader's attention focuses on what images remain. "Much of cartooning's power comes from its ability to do more with less: when the drawings and ideas are distilled to their essences, the result can be more beautiful and powerful for having eliminated the clutter" (Watterson, 2001, p. 14).

McCloud calls cartooning a new way of seeing (1993) while Eisner (1985) refers to it as a new way of reading. Just like understanding music or circuit diagrams requires a different perspective for understanding, cartooning requires the recognition of simplified characters and images (icons) and the interpretation of meaning as the eye moves from one panel to the next. To create the language of comics, the cartoonist depends on the commonality of experiences shared with the reader. The two work together to create an understanding of what is happening within a panel and the action that transpires between panels (Eisner, 1985; Harvey, 1994; McCloud, 1993). For example, a man on his knees with hands in a position of prayer can be recognized as such with no words needed. However, placed in different contexts – in Bible-era clothes bathed in a ray of light, in rags before a judge, holding a diamond ring while kneeling at the feet of a woman – readers understand that the person is praying, begging or proposing. Understanding of the body in a certain position means certain things. Meaning occurs because the creator and reader share the same knowledge and interpretation of the kneeling figure in certain situations (Eisner, p. 15).

Whether the sequential art product is a comic book, graphic novel, or a comic strip found in the newspaper or online, the four fundamentals of sequential art are present: narrative, composition, characters and draftsmanship (Eisner, 1985). Harvey recognizes these four distinct characteristics for critical analysis: narrative breakdown, layout, panel composition and style (1993). In order to understand the complexities of comics and to critically evaluate them, let us examine the Sunday comic strip for each of Harvey's elements.

Narrative Breakdown

One way to evaluate a strip is to consider how well the narrative breakdown contributes to both visual impact and story progression. Narrative breakdown refers to how the story is divided into panels. Both verbal and visual elements must be considered in sectioning the story into individual frames that tell it the most effectively (Eisner, 1985). For instance, the size of a speech balloon may limit the number of words that can be included in a single frame, and thus influence the breakdown. The artist must constantly maneuver the visual and verbal elements of the story to meet the practical technical publication requirements of the newspaper.

The space between the panels of a comic strip is called the *gutter*. This is where most of the action of the comics occurs, in the reader's mind as the eye moves across the comic strip. *Closure* is the natural habit of humans to create something when we see nothing – we perceive three dots to be a triangle, for example. Closure also explains why we imagine a whole when we see only a part. For instance, we see a hand in a comics frame and imagine the entire body of the character. This closure concept also works between frames: as the comics reader moves from one panel to the next, the mind fills in the missing action that occurred between Panel A and Panel B (Eisner, 1985; Harvey, 1994; McCloud, 1993). As McCloud explains, "Comics panels fracture both time and space, offering a jagged staccato rhythm of unconnected moments. But closure allows us to connect those moments and mentally construct a continuous, unified reality" (1993, p. 67).

Narrative breakdown controls both the duration and focus of the reader's attention. "The succession of panels in a strip is the mechanism by which timing is achieved, and carefully controlled timing enhances the drama of every event. In gag strips, timing may be the very essence of the humor" (Harvey, 1994, p. 16). Space substitutes for time in the comics, thus time can be manipulated – condensed or expanded – through narrative breakdown and layout. For example, a series of frames can signify a long passage of time such as an entire day or year, with each frame representing a snapshot of an event that occurred during that time. Conversely, a series of frames could indicate a number of separate events happening in a very short span of time. The lighting of a match, for instance, could be broken down into several frames.

Layout

When designing the layout, the prime concerns are serving the flow of the narrative and following standard reading conventions. The placement and design must follow the reader's natural eye movement, which in Western cultures means left to right and top to bottom.

While still important, other concerns such as mood, emotion, action and timing are secondary to creating a layout that doesn't fight the natural tendency of readership. These other elements can be controlled effectively through narrative breakdown and perspective within the individual panel.

Layout in newspaper strips is, for the cartoonist, largely a matter of deciding how wide each panel should be. Often that decision is more by format restrictions than narrative breakdown (Harvey, 1994). The standardized layout format gives newspapers flexibility in printing the comics section but limits the cartoonist's creativity. *Calvin and Hobbes* creator Bill Watterson described the rigid Sunday format:

> The strip is drawn in three rows. Printed full size, this will fill half a newspaper page. Most papers are reluctant to run a strip that big, so they remove the top row of panels, which makes the strip take up only one third of a page. Because the cartoonist cannot count on readers seeing the top panels, he must waste them on "throw-away" gags that have little to do with the rest of the strip. To make the strip smaller still, editors can reduce the panels and line them up in two rows, so the strip takes only a quarter of a page. Some papers cut and reduce even more, at which point the strip is virtually illegible. To neatly accommodate all these variations, the panel divisions are specific and unyielding. The strip will fit the different space needs of different newspapers this way, but the cartoonist loses the ability to design his strip effectively (1996, p. 14).

Making concession to the format requirements, such as simplifying drawings or eliminating dialogue, is one of the drawbacks of cartooning. When reconstructed by editors, a strip's designed timing and rhythm are interrupted which "frequently made for an ugly, graceless strip" (Watterson, 1996, p. 14). Watterson eventually reached an agreement with his syndicate so newspapers were not allowed to alter the strip's layout during printing. *Calvin and Hobbes* appeared exactly as Watterson drew it, preserving the integrity of the original work (Watterson, 1996, 2001).

Style

"Graphic style is to the visual character of a comic strip what diction is to language: each is peculiarly distinct" (Harvey, 1994, p. 16). A cartoonist's specific style becomes his signature. Like handwriting, a person's cartooning style is individual but imitable. Several comic strips continued long after their creator's deaths – *Dennis the Menace* and *Blondie*, for example. Other comics did not. Herriman's *Krazy Kat* was impossible for someone else to recreate. After 50 years, another cartoonist drawing Snoopy rather than *Peanuts*' creator Schulz would have been a travesty.

The choice to draw with simple lines and no background, or to create more realistic characters and elaborate backgrounds is all a matter of the cartoonist's style. In evaluating style, one can describe it and comment on its appropriateness to its subject. Other than that, the evaluation is purely subjective (Harvey, 1994).

Panel Composition

Composition is the choice and arrangement of the various visual elements within each panel of a strip. Each panel and the combination of panels must work together to artfully tell the story. According to Harvey, clarity is the first measure of effective composition, not only in being able to recognize what the drawing is, but also in "choosing and arranging the elements of a panel in such a way as to clearly depict their function in advancing the story" (1994, p. 17). "The graphic needs of each panel must be accommodated and the panels themselves should form a pleasing arrangement so the entire page is attractive, balanced, and unified as well" (Watterson, 2001, p. 17).

In the most effective comic strip panel composition, attention should be focused on whatever element in that panel contributes most to the telling of the story. Harvey refers to this as the "graphic center of narrative focus" – *graphic center* emphasizing the visual nature of the medium, *narrative focus* embracing the storytelling function of comic strip art (1994, p. 18).

The panel itself functions as a stage proscenium for the reader. The frame establishes the perspective from which the action is viewed. This manipulation of perspective allows the artist to clarify activity, orient the reader and stimulate emotion. While the earliest comics used a stable perspective, often that of a person standing eight to ten feet from the action, later cartoonists adopted filmmaking techniques to vary the visual element of their strips and manipulate reader emotions. Using long establishing shots, close-ups, point of view shots and other camera shots, cartoonists are able to influence the reader's response like a film director. For example, a high perspective or "bird's eye" view creates a sense of detachment on the part of the reader. The "worm's eye" view, on the other hand, involves the reader and creates fear just as a low-angle camera shot would in a movie. The shape of the panel also has implications. Narrow panels create a sense of confinement, and wide panels (perhaps with no borders) create opportunity for escape or plenty of space for movement. By manipulating the perspective, the cartoonist manipulates the reader's orientation to the scene and produces different emotional responses. (Eisner, 1985; Harvey, 1994; McCloud, 1993).

Panel composition is another method that a cartoonist uses to control time and rhythm of the story. One method is to utilize "quiet space." The cartoonist may create a panel in which there is no verbal balloon, causing the reader to pause and create actual passage of time. Panel size also can be used to indicate time as well. For example, by placing characters, facing right, at the far right side of a longer panel, and leaving the left side blank, the cartoonist creates a sense that the two have been walking for a while and that some time has passed.

Bill Watterson and the New Sunday Format

Calvin and Hobbes is the story of a six-year old boy Calvin and his best friend, Hobbes. While a typical stuffed toy when others are present, Hobbes grows to full size when alone with Calvin. Hobbes also walks, talks, eats, and attacks. Calvin's imagination takes them from fighting dinosaurs to exploring new galaxies, and the reader happily tags along. According to cartoonist Bill Watterson, the Sunday comic had to deserve the extra space offered by the larger newspaper formats, and he used the Sunday strip as an opportunity for more complex storytelling and drawing. The longer strips were also a better medium for real back and forth dialogue between characters, which allowed their personalities to emerge (Watterson, 1996). In addition to Hobbes, Calvin's world includes his parents; Rosalyn the babysitter; Miss Wormwood, his teacher; Moe, the school bully; and Susie, his neighbor and classmate.

As mentioned earlier, Watterson found the requirements of the Sunday format limiting. Eventually the syndicate that distributed *Calvin and Hobbes* offered to market the strip as an unbreakable half-page, one that could be reduced in size but not reordered. Watterson would no longer be confined to the horizontal tiers and required breaks. He could place boxes anywhere and make them any size, like those in comic books but without the concerns of turning pages. Watterson now had the flexibility he wanted to create what he felt was a better strip: "I remain convinced that the larger Sunday strip gave newspapers a better product and made the comics section more fun for readers" (2001, p. 15).

There was concern that newspapers would not agree to the demands and simply stop carrying the strip. Watterson was willing to accept less income for creative control. While some of the newspapers shrunk the half-page to fit their formats and the strip appeared smaller than before, virtually no papers dropped *Calvin and Hobbes* with the new format. In fact, many printed the full-sized half page. But the new format offered its own challenges. The strip still had to work with the natural flow of the readers' eyes. Boxes needed to be placed to minimize confusion and big panels had to be designed so as not to foil surprises. Watterson went to extremes: some of the Sunday strips had twenty panels, while others were just one big box with smaller panels inset (a single large frame would technically make that particular episode a cartoon rather than sequential art). While pleased with the chance to finally draw the cartoon the way Watterson wanted, drawing and coloring took longer, so his workload for the Sunday strip more than doubled. Eventually Watterson chose to end the strip, as his artistic interests moved from cartooning to painting and music. The final *Calvin and Hobbes* strip appeared on December 31, 1995 (Watterson, 1996, 2001).

Calvin and Hobbes

Watterson's work offers an opportunity to consider the elements previously mentioned. What follows is a discussion of several Calvin and Hobbes strips that are attached for reader analysis.

Figure 1. (Watterson, 1990, p. 144)

This is an example of a daily comic strip. Each activity is a separate panel. *Closure* enables the reader to fill in the action that occurs in the gutter between panels. This strip shows three ways of introducing sound into the strip: oversized lettering to indicate yelling, the sound effect drawn in a different style of size and shape, and finally the typical speech or dialogue balloons. The stars accompanying the sound are recognized as "hard contact" symbols, often seen when characters are engaged in physical combat. Speed is indicated by the direction of Calvin's hair and Hobbes' whiskers. The third frame actually represents two moments in time: the actual impact that occurs at the left side of the panel immediately in front of the door (Calvin's shoe is actually still there, under Hobbe's body) and the flight off the steps. Stars and planets in the final panel again indicate Calvin's pain and disorientation from the attack. The speech balloons carry the verbal gag that follows the visual humor of the third panel.

Figure 2. (Watterson, 1990, p. 75)

This Sunday comic strip contains the same plot as the daily example in Figure 1. Here the extra space – and thus time – allows Watterson to create suspense. The eye pauses at the blank space to the right of the lamp and then back to Hobbes' head, taking in the humor of a tiger hiding so well behind a skinny lamp. The eye moves quickly through Calvin's exit off the bus, but pauses briefly on the second drawing of Calvin, where the lack of frame and background and the closer perspective increase suspense. The eye moves quickly past Calvin's entrance into the home – all frames have shown ordinary events that we instantly recognize.

The drawing of the actual attack is similar to that of Figure 1, but longer, thus we imagine the hit is stronger and carries the two further into the yard. This time Calvin's shoes are flying into the air and his eyeballs are delayed in following his body. The fight – which was absent in the shorter daily comic – is humorously characterized and takes several panels. Motion lines indicate the subjects have bounced, while the circle shadow on the ground lends credence to their time in flight. While one panel is of constant motion indicating several moments in time, the next panel is a frozen point in time and provides a "rest" before moving to the next action panel. The lack of frame in the third fight panel gives the reader a feeling of "uncontainment;" there is a sense that the fight continues for some time. Finally the two are spent, with no clear winner. Again, the final dialogue completes the gag.

Figure 3 and *Figure 4*. (Watterson, 1995, p. 60; 1990, p.45))

These are two examples of the old Sunday format. The title panel and second frame are throw-away panels. Many papers would start the strip with the second row of panels in Figure 3. Comparing Figure 3 to the alignment in Figure 4, one notices how the rhythm of the throw-away gag is interrupted and how the flow into the "real" comic is unsatisfactory. Without the mental shift that accompanies the move to the next row of panels as in Figure 3, the start after the throw-away panel seems a bit of a non sequitur. This panel also illustrates how Watterson was able to use longer dialogue in the Sunday strip to reveal his characters' personalities. The speech-free panel allows time for Calvin to think and thus arrive at his final panel conclusion.

Figure 5. (Watterson, 1992, p. 106)

This strip is drawn in a different style than most of the other episodes. One notices again the obvious division between the throw-away panels and the rest of the strip. Much of the humor here is created by the contrast between the realistically-drawn characters the combative (and normal) Calvin and Susie dialogue. The real Calvin world is back in the final frame.

Figure 6. (Watterson, 1992, p. 143)

Like most six-year old children, Calvin is slightly obsessed with dinosaurs and they make regular appearances in the strip. This is an example of a dinosaur strip in the old format, where the technical requirements for printing dictated the narrative breakdown and size of panels.

Figure 7. (Watterson, 1995, p. 203)

The larger panels of the new format better accommodate dinosaurs. The eye moves across the large first frame to the inset caption that explains the setting. The proximity of the next caption ensures the reader will read first, look at the picture second. Following natural reading movements, the eye catches the third caption in the upper left corner of the final frame before focusing on the face of the T Rex at the controls of the F-14. The reader pauses on the face in wonder, before moving to the longer shots that actually show the dinosaurs in planes and complete our understanding of the joke. The final inset brings us back to Calvin's real world; part of the humor is the contrast between Calvin's and Hobbes' reactions to the story line we just read.

Figure 8. (Watterson, 1995, p. 191)

A third dinosaur example demonstrates how the narrative flow can be directed through panel size and shape. The close-up shots of Susie and Calvin's narration bring us into the strip. The large panels with the dinosaurs are a surprise and the dinosaurs are threatening. The inset cutaway to Calvin's classmates matches the dialogue, while providing readers with a clue about the actual event that is occurring outside Calvin's narration. The cutaway is another film technique useful in the comics, just like close-ups, establishing shots and point-of-view shots. Again the final frame brings us back to Calvin's real world. The nature of Susie and Calvin's relationship is shown by his use of Susie in his report on overpopulation; Calvin's gesture to Susie in the final frame is simply an exclamation point to his total report.

Figure 9 and *Figure 10.* (Watterson, 1992, p. 230; 1996, p. 77)

In these two strips one can compare a recurring Calvin theme, the wild wagon ride, in the old and new formats. Figure 9 has lots of philosophical dialogue, as do many of the wagon rides. The narrative breakdown occurs primarily because of the dialogue. In Figure 10, the philosophy is still present, but the visual elements are more prominent. Freed from the required panel breakdown, the wagon ride can spread across the page, giving us sense of movement and a better idea of the land's topography. The quiet spaces in the panels give the reader time to consider Calvin's words, rather than moving through them quickly to get to the joke, as one might be tempted to do in Figure 9. The longer horizontal panels and vertical insets control the reader's rhythm and perhaps give us a sense of the up and down of Calvin's wagon ride. Closure allows Watterson to leave his characters literally up in the air in the final frame; we know gravity will bring them safely to earth and we will see our friends tomorrow.

Figure 11. (Watterson, 1996, p. 124)

Calvin and Hobbes often take walks as well as wagon rides in their forest. Here is an example of one in the new format. The first long panel gives us a sense of the size of the forest; the two will be walking for a while. The inset close-ups concentrate reader attention on the dialogue. The absence of background and framing on the second tier also focuses our attention on the speech balloons. We're afforded the time to think along with Calvin in the quiet space of the circle panel. The distinct shape and panel border make the reader pause – Calvin's eyes looking back to the left also cause us to stop a moment and look at what he's looking at, something we probably missed on first glance at the panel. Together we walk off stage right, contemplating Calvin's comment (and wondering if we are not just that) and envying Hobbe's ability to find happiness in the simple things.

Figure 12. (Watterson, 1995, p. 168)

This is a new format strip where Watterson probably got carried away with the freedom it offered. Panel composition and layout are much more complicated once the restrictions of the printing process are removed. Watterson says that "the initial thrill of being able to design my Sunday strip layouts was soon tempered by the difficulty of it" (1996, p. 168). The second row of this strip demonstrates the expansion of time through a series of panels. While one can imagine Hobbes taking only a moment to reach his prey, for Calvin (and the reader) time stood still. As a dream sequence, however, perhaps it appeared as slow motion. Since the drawings are so strong, no dialogue is necessary.

Figure 13. (Watterson, 1995, p. 206)

This strip condenses an entire day into 19 different snapshots. Each frame tells a story by itself and the eye can pause and linger at the frames that the reader most identifies with. Dialogue in this strip is unnecessary, even in the final frame. A drawing of Calvin and Hobbes, silently dreaming of tomorrow's adventures would have been just as satisfactory an ending.

Figure 14. (Watterson, 1994, p. 111)

Another example of the possibilities offered by the new format. Since reading patterns follow naturally left to right, the smaller and framed inset panels hold attention and do not ruin the full-size surprise. Attempting to draw a bird's eye view of the two in a tree in the smaller panels of the original Sunday format would have been a disaster. Here the eye follows the insets to the main drawing of Calvin and Hobbes, considers the balloons, then follows the rope and tree to the ground and moves to the left to notice the trap set for Susie. The eye makes a circle around the frame, and our understanding of the joke is not complete until we do.

Figure 15. (Watterson, 1995, p. 186)

This strip is an excellent example of how comics can visually illustrate concepts. Even without the dialogue in the final frame, readers can understand that the other panels illustrate time spent in school. The open lower tier adds to the freedom Calvin feels (as do teachers and students of all ages) once school gets out.

Conclusion

Comics are a form of sequential art that often involve cartooning, an iconic language. Through an examination of *Calvin and Hobbes* Sunday comics, this paper intended to demonstrate some of the visual elements involved in sequential art for the purpose of increasing the reader's understanding and appreciation for this unique medium. Because of the comics' historical attachment to yellow journalism and the business of newspaper circulation, as well as the medium's penchant for telling humorous, fanciful stories on unimportant subjects, sequential art as a communications tool has been little explored. The iconic nature of comics offers opportunities for successful crossing of verbal language barriers and seems to have unlimited potential in terms of training, education, and entertainment. Certainly representation in cartooning, the icon as visual language, the role of identification, and the use of color in the Sunday strip as well as the social effect of the daily comics bear further investigation. As the visual elements start to gain importance through the pictorial turn, perhaps the medium of sequential art will finally be considered seriously and potential more fully realized.

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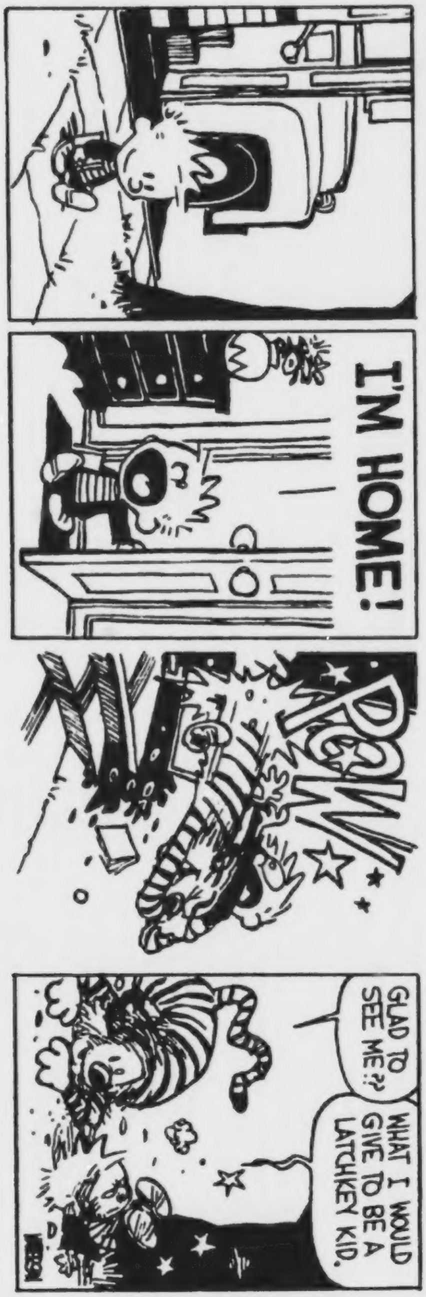
I'M HOME!
POW
GLAD TO SEE ME?!
WHAT I WOULD GIVE TO BE A LATCHKEY KID.

Figure 1.

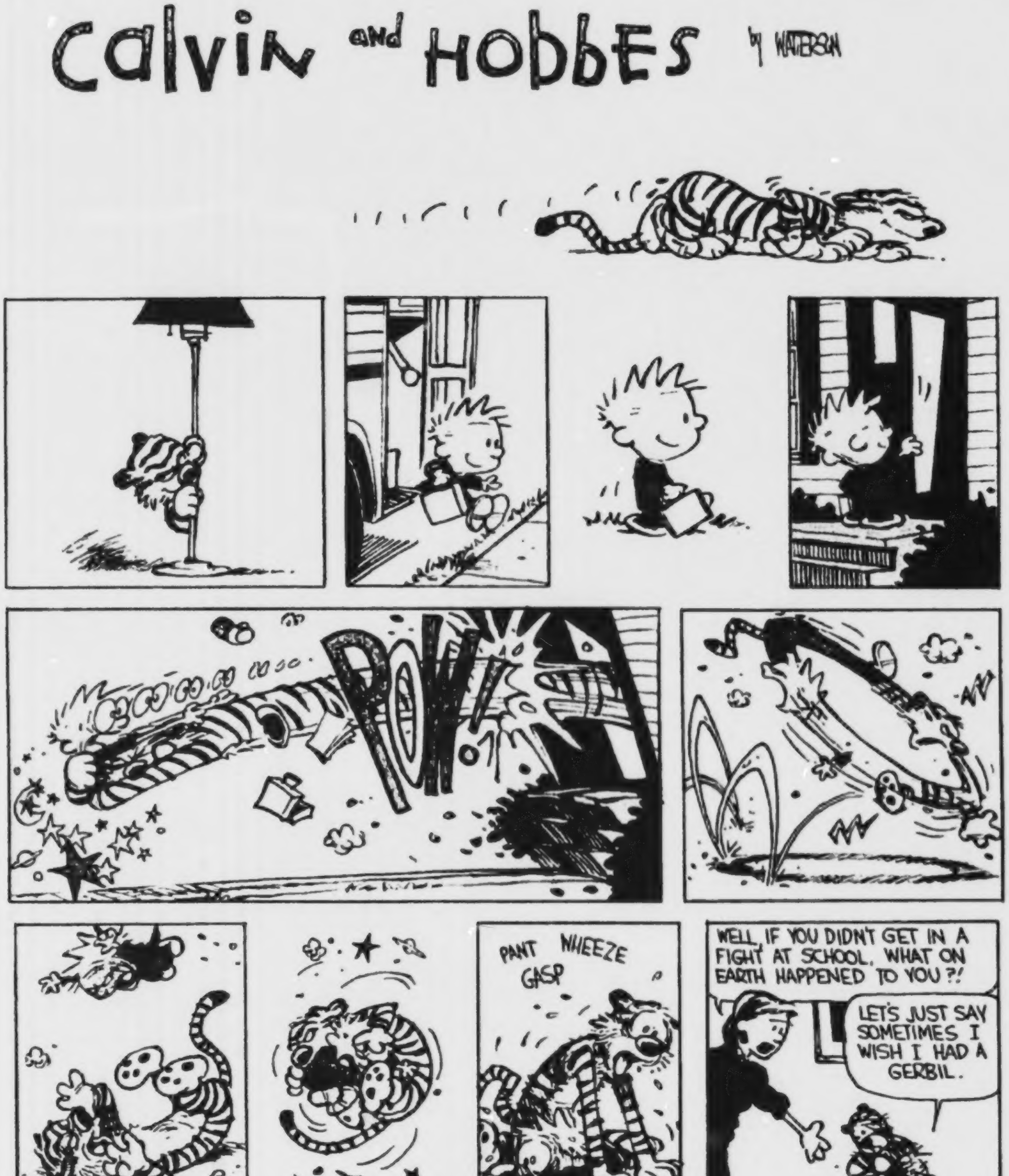
Calvin and HOBBES
by WATTERSON
POW!
PANT
WHEEZE
GASP
WATTERSON
WELL, IF YOU DIDN'T GET IN A FIGHT AT SCHOOL, WHAT ON EARTH HAPPENED TO YOU ?!
LET'S JUST SAY SOMETIMES I WISH I HAD A GERBIL.

Figure 2.

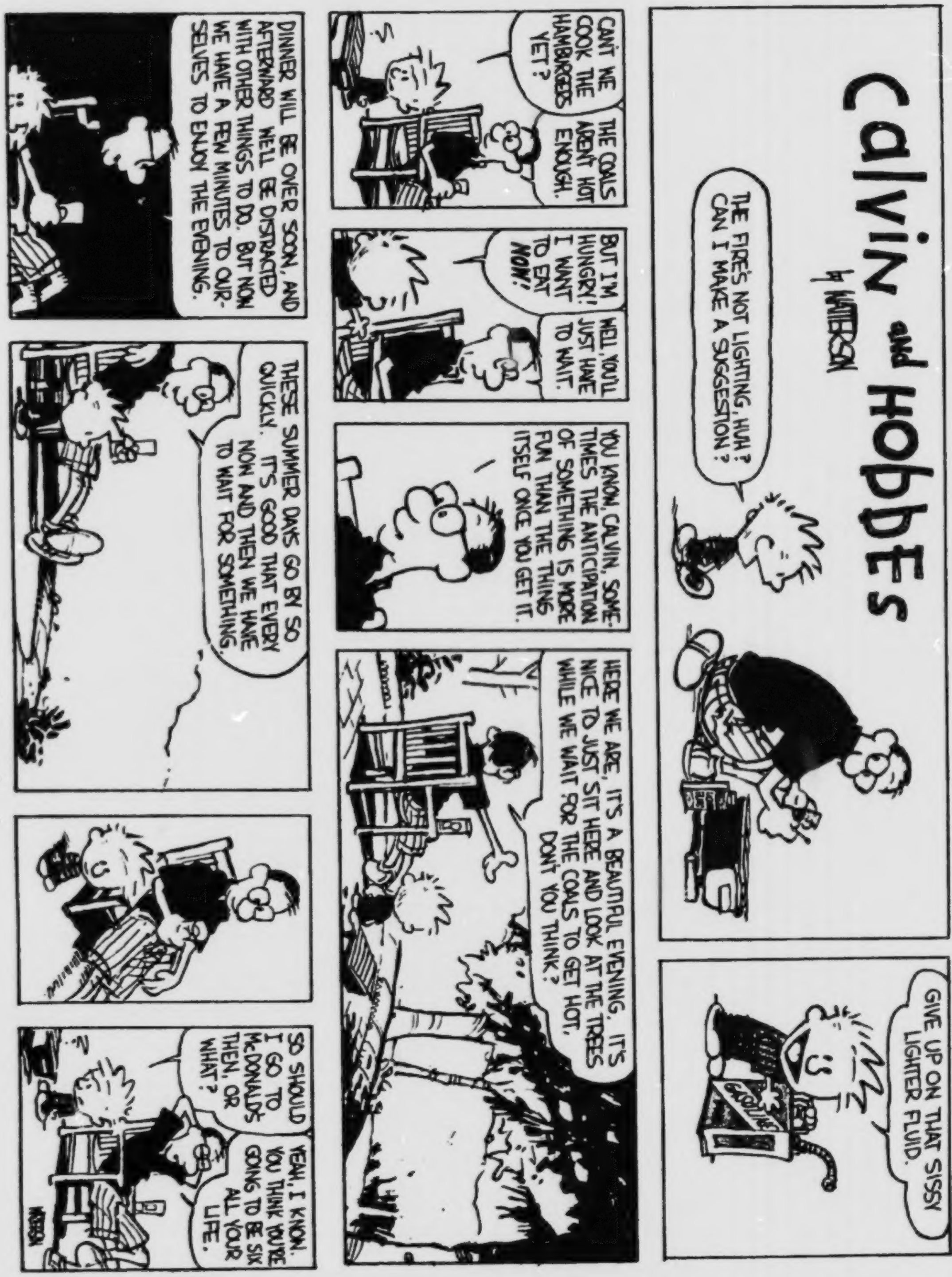
Calvin and HobbEs
by WATTERSON
THE FIRE'S NOT LIGHTING, HUH? CAN I MAKE A SUGGESTION?
GIVE UP ON THAT SISSY LIGHTER FLUID.
CAN'T WE COOK THE HAMBURGERS YET?
THE COALS AREN'T HOT ENOUGH.
BUT I'M HUNGRY! I WANT TO EAT NOW!
WELL, YOU'LL JUST HAVE TO WAIT.
YOU KNOW, CALVIN, SOMETIMES THE ANTICIPATION OF SOMETHING IS MORE FUN THAN THE THING ITSELF ONCE YOU GET IT.
HERE WE ARE, IT'S A BEAUTIFUL EVENING. IT'S NICE TO JUST SIT HERE AND LOOK AT THE TREES WHILE WE WAIT FOR THE COALS TO GET HOT, DON'T YOU THINK?
DINNER WILL BE OVER SOON, AND AFTERWARD WE'LL BE DISTRACTED WITH OTHER THINGS TO DO. BUT NOW WE HAVE A FEW MINUTES TO OURSELVES TO ENJOY THE EVENING.
THESE SUMMER DAYS GO BY SO QUICKLY. IT'S GOOD THAT EVERY NOW AND THEN WE HAVE TO WAIT FOR SOMETHING.
SO SHOULD I GO TO McDONALD'S THEN, OR WHAT?
YEAH, I KNOW. YOU THINK YOU'RE GOING TO BE SIX ALL YOUR LIFE.
GASOLINE

Figure 3.

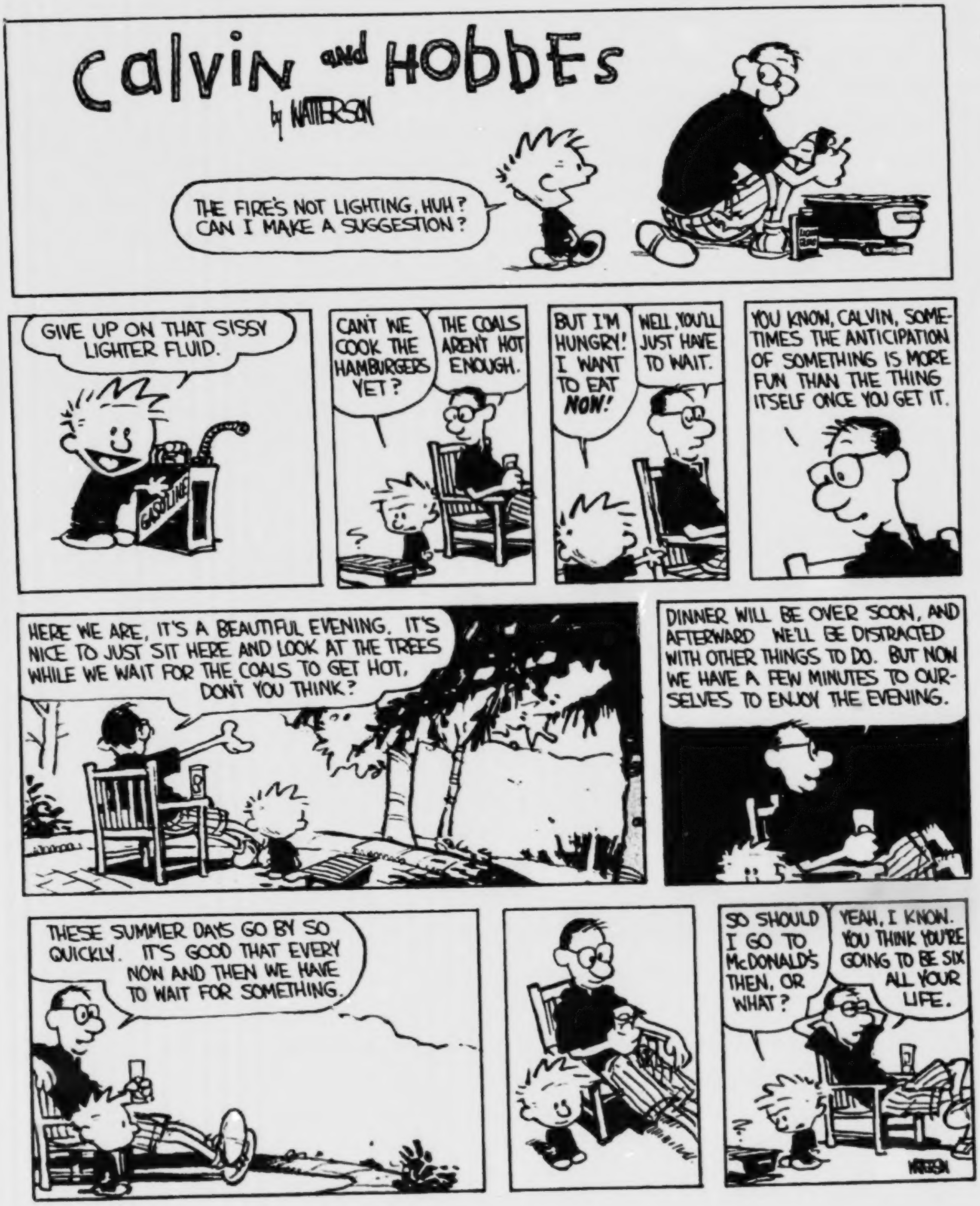
Calvin and HOBBES
by WATTERSON
THE FIRE'S NOT LIGHTING, HUH? CAN I MAKE A SUGGESTION?
GIVE UP ON THAT SISSY LIGHTER FLUID.
GASOLINE
CAN'T WE COOK THE HAMBURGERS YET?
THE COALS AREN'T HOT ENOUGH.
BUT I'M HUNGRY! I WANT TO EAT NOW!
WELL, YOU'LL JUST HAVE TO WAIT.
YOU KNOW, CALVIN, SOMETIMES THE ANTICIPATION OF SOMETHING IS MORE FUN THAN THE THING ITSELF ONCE YOU GET IT.
HERE WE ARE, IT'S A BEAUTIFUL EVENING. IT'S NICE TO JUST SIT HERE AND LOOK AT THE TREES WHILE WE WAIT FOR THE COALS TO GET HOT, DON'T YOU THINK?
DINNER WILL BE OVER SOON, AND AFTERWARD WE'LL BE DISTRACTED WITH OTHER THINGS TO DO. BUT NOW WE HAVE A FEW MINUTES TO OURSELVES TO ENJOY THE EVENING.
THESE SUMMER DAYS GO BY SO QUICKLY. IT'S GOOD THAT EVERY NOW AND THEN WE HAVE TO WAIT FOR SOMETHING.
SO SHOULD I GO TO McDONALD'S THEN, OR WHAT?
YEAH, I KNOW. YOU THINK YOU'RE GOING TO BE SIX ALL YOUR LIFE.
WATTERSON

Figure 4.

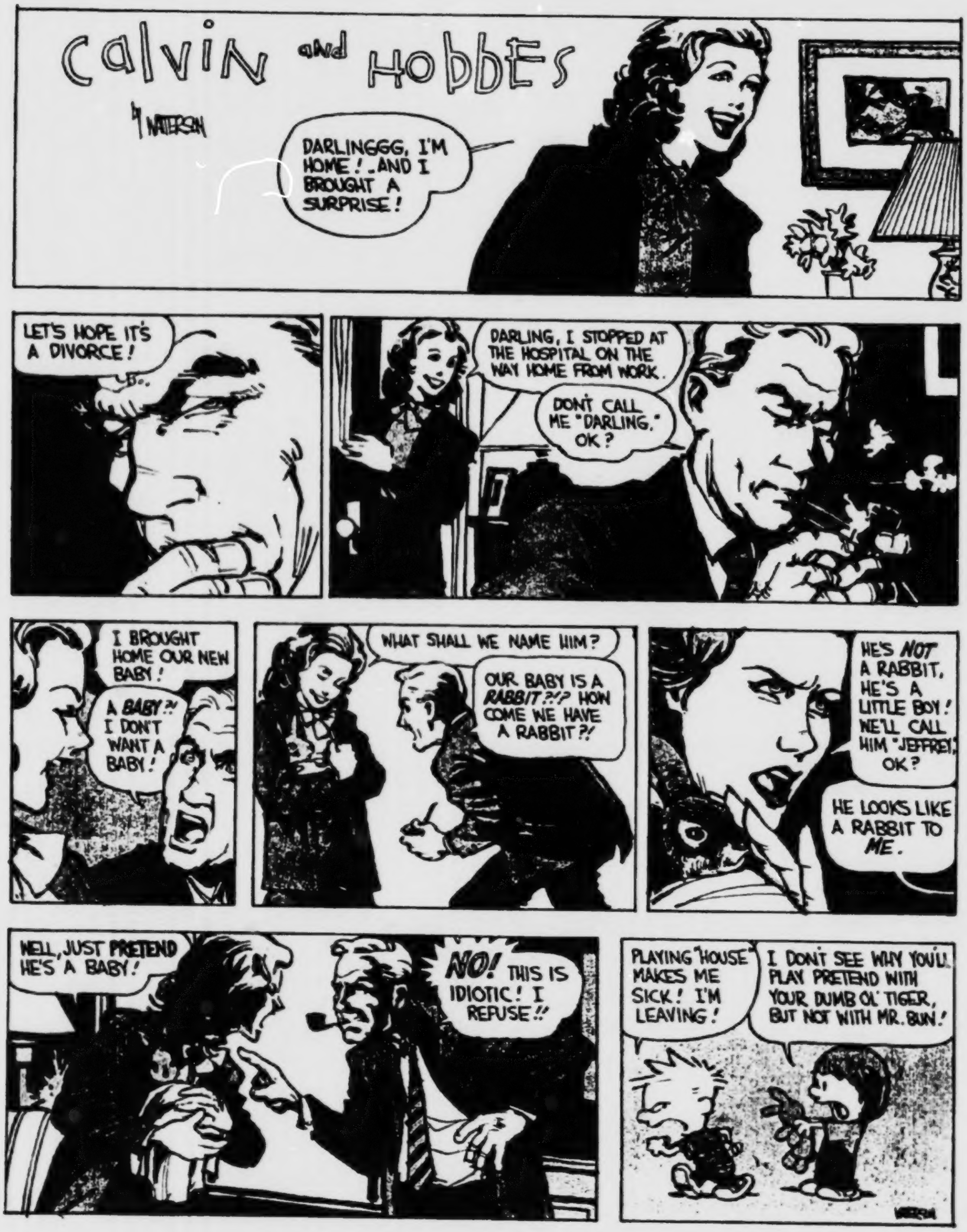
Calvin and Hobbes
by WATTERSON
DARLINGGG, I'M HOME! AND I BROUGHT A SURPRISE!
LET'S HOPE IT'S A DIVORCE!
DARLING, I STOPPED AT THE HOSPITAL ON THE WAY HOME FROM WORK.
DON'T CALL ME "DARLING," OK?
I BROUGHT HOME OUR NEW BABY!
A BABY?! I DON'T WANT A BABY!
WHAT SHALL WE NAME HIM?
OUR BABY IS A RABBIT?!? HOW COME WE HAVE A RABBIT?!
HE'S NOT A RABBIT, HE'S A LITTLE BOY! WE'LL CALL HIM "JEFFREY," OK?
HE LOOKS LIKE A RABBIT TO ME.
WELL, JUST PRETEND HE'S A BABY!
NO! THIS IS IDIOTIC! I REFUSE!!
PLAYING "HOUSE" MAKES ME SICK! I'M LEAVING!
I DON'T SEE WHY YOU'LL PLAY PRETEND WITH YOUR DUMB OL' TIGER, BUT NOT WITH MR. BUN!
WATTERSON

Figure 5.

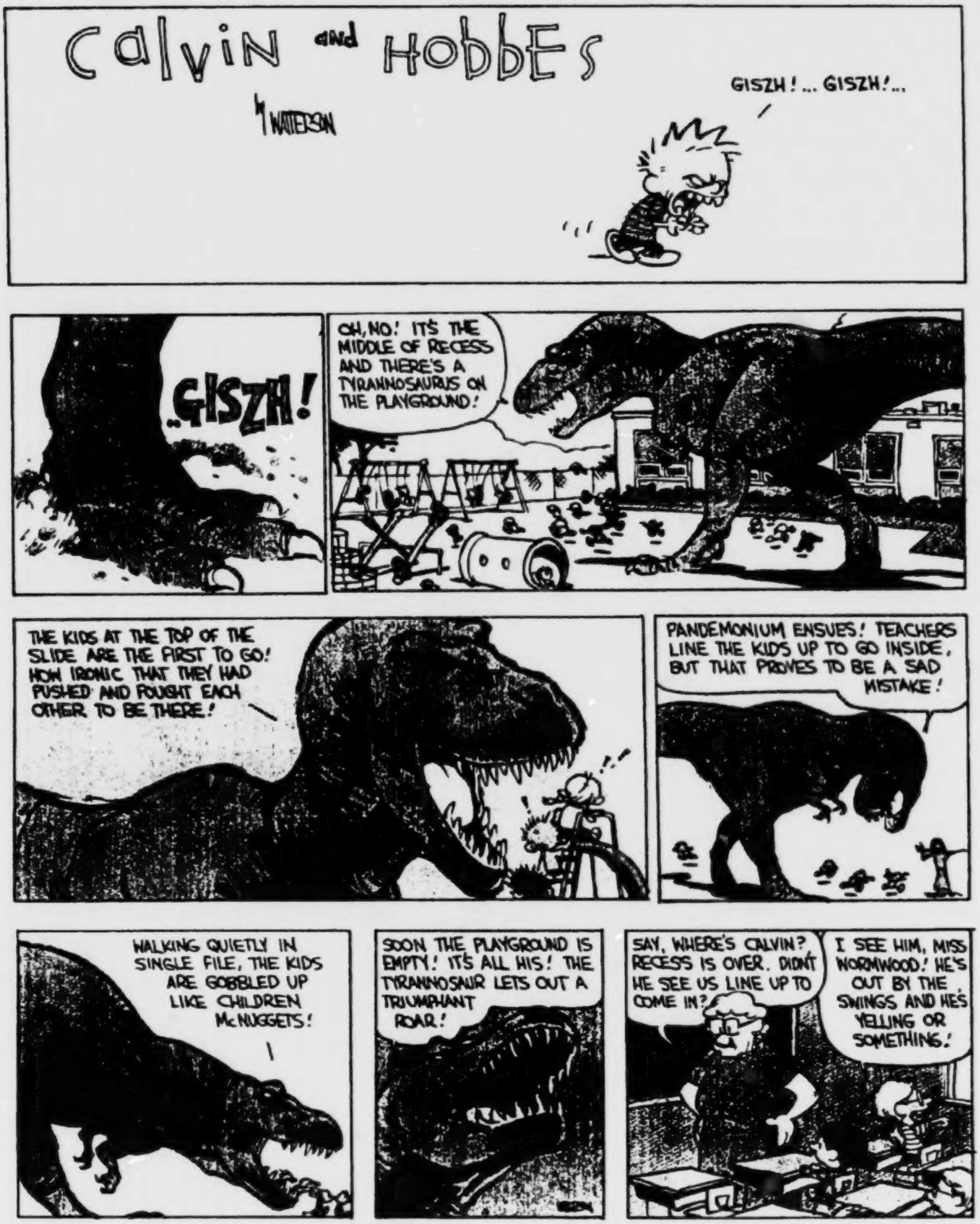
Calvin and HOBBES
by WATTERSON
GISZH! ... GISZH! ...
..GISZH!
OH, NO! IT'S THE MIDDLE OF RECESS AND THERE'S A TYRANNOSAURUS ON THE PLAYGROUND!
THE KIDS AT THE TOP OF THE SLIDE ARE THE FIRST TO GO! HOW IRONIC THAT THEY HAD PUSHED AND FOUGHT EACH OTHER TO BE THERE!
PANDEMONIUM ENSUES! TEACHERS LINE THE KIDS UP TO GO INSIDE, BUT THAT PROVES TO BE A SAD MISTAKE!
WALKING QUIETLY IN SINGLE FILE, THE KIDS ARE GOBBLED UP LIKE CHILDREN McNUGGETS!
SOON THE PLAYGROUND IS EMPTY! IT'S ALL HIS! THE TYRANNOSAUR LETS OUT A TRIUMPHANT ROAR!
SAY, WHERE'S CALVIN? RECESS IS OVER. DIDN'T HE SEE US LINE UP TO COME IN?
I SEE HIM, MISS WORMWOOD! HE'S OUT BY THE SWINGS AND HE'S YELLING OR SOMETHING!

Figure 6.

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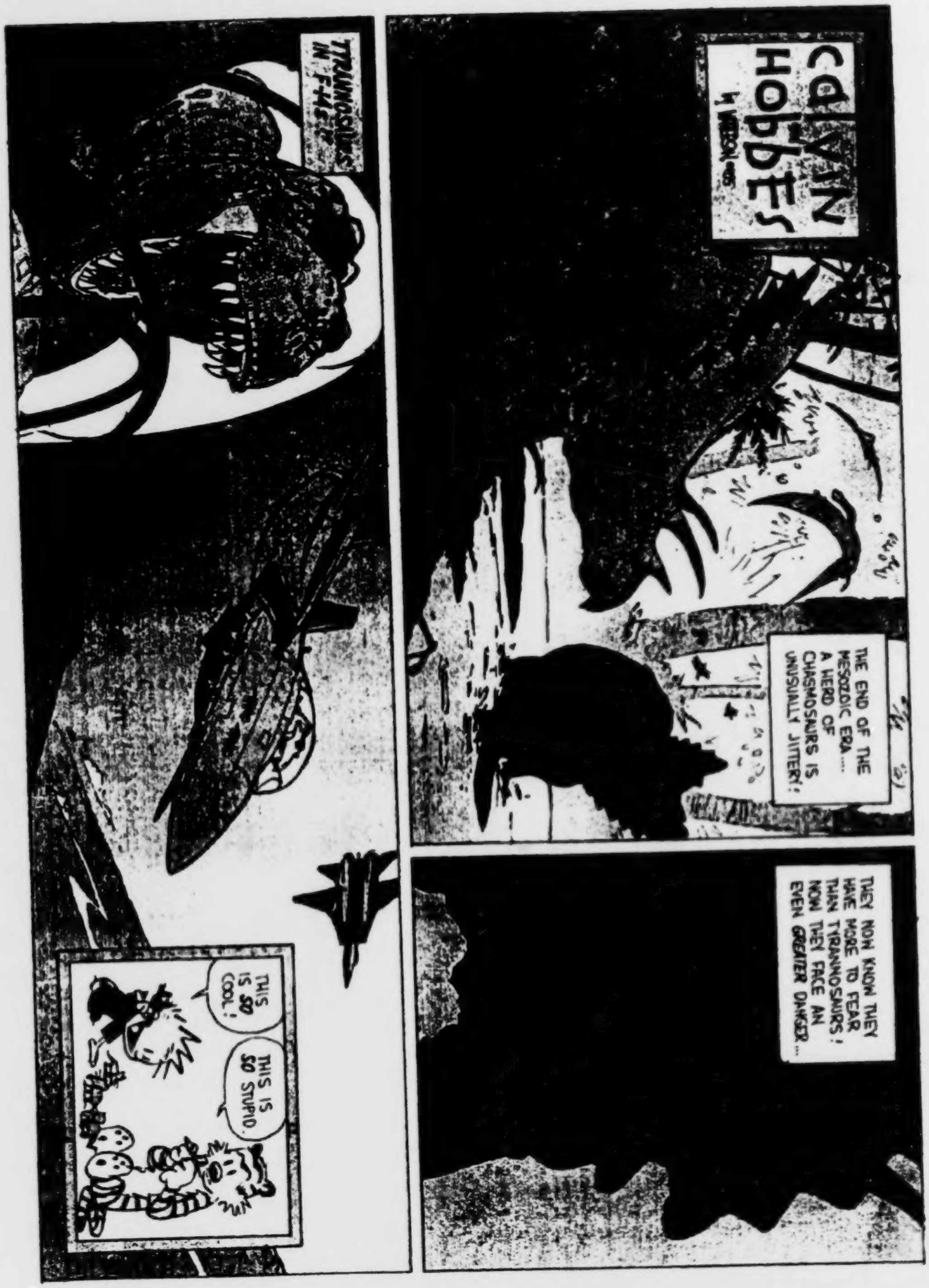
Calvin and Hobbes by WATTERSON
THE END OF THE MESOZOIC ERA... A HERD OF CHASMOSAURS IS UNUSUALLY JITTERY!
THEY NOW KNOW THEY HAVE MORE TO FEAR THAN TYRANNOSAURS! NOW THEY FACE AN EVEN GREATER DANGER...
TYRANNOSAURS IN F-14s!!
THIS IS SO COOL!
THIS IS SO STUPID.

Figure 7.

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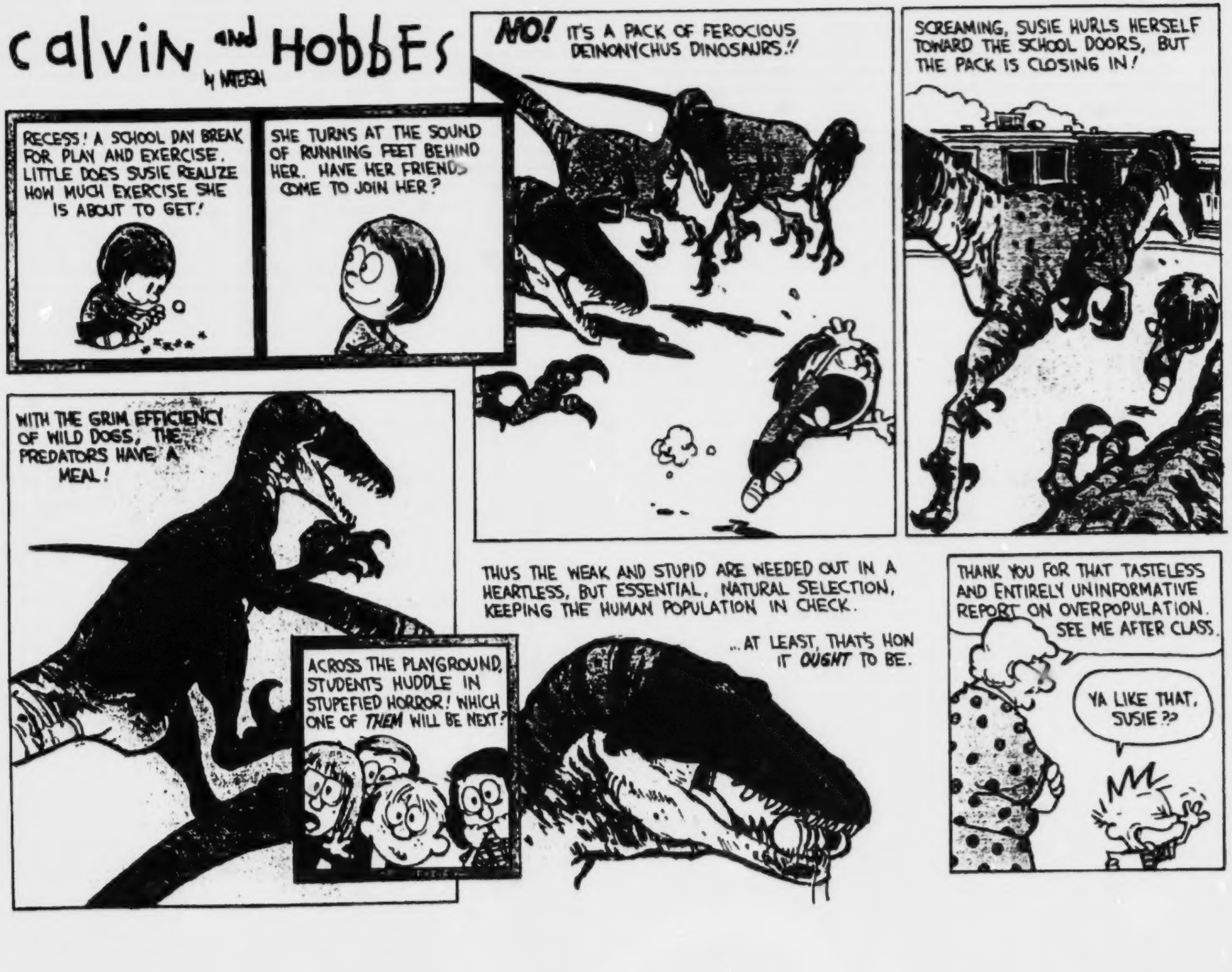
calvin and HOBBES
RECESS! A SCHOOL DAY BREAK FOR PLAY AND EXERCISE. LITTLE DOES SUSIE REALIZE HOW MUCH EXERCISE SHE IS ABOUT TO GET!
SHE TURNS AT THE SOUND OF RUNNING FEET BEHIND HER. HAVE HER FRIENDS COME TO JOIN HER?
NO! IT'S A PACK OF FEROCIOUS DEINONYCHUS DINOSAURS!!
SCREAMING, SUSIE HURLS HERSELF TOWARD THE SCHOOL DOORS, BUT THE PACK IS CLOSING IN!
WITH THE GRIM EFFICIENCY OF WILD DOGS, THE PREDATORS HAVE A MEAL!
ACROSS THE PLAYGROUND, STUDENTS HUDDLE IN STUPEFIED HORROR! WHICH ONE OF THEM WILL BE NEXT?
THUS THE WEAK AND STUPID ARE WEEDED OUT IN A HEARTLESS, BUT ESSENTIAL, NATURAL SELECTION, KEEPING THE HUMAN POPULATION IN CHECK.
...AT LEAST, THAT'S HOW IT OUGHT TO BE.
THANK YOU FOR THAT TASTELESS AND ENTIRELY UNINFORMATIVE REPORT ON OVERPOPULATION. SEE ME AFTER CLASS.
YA LIKE THAT, SUSIE ??

Figure 8.

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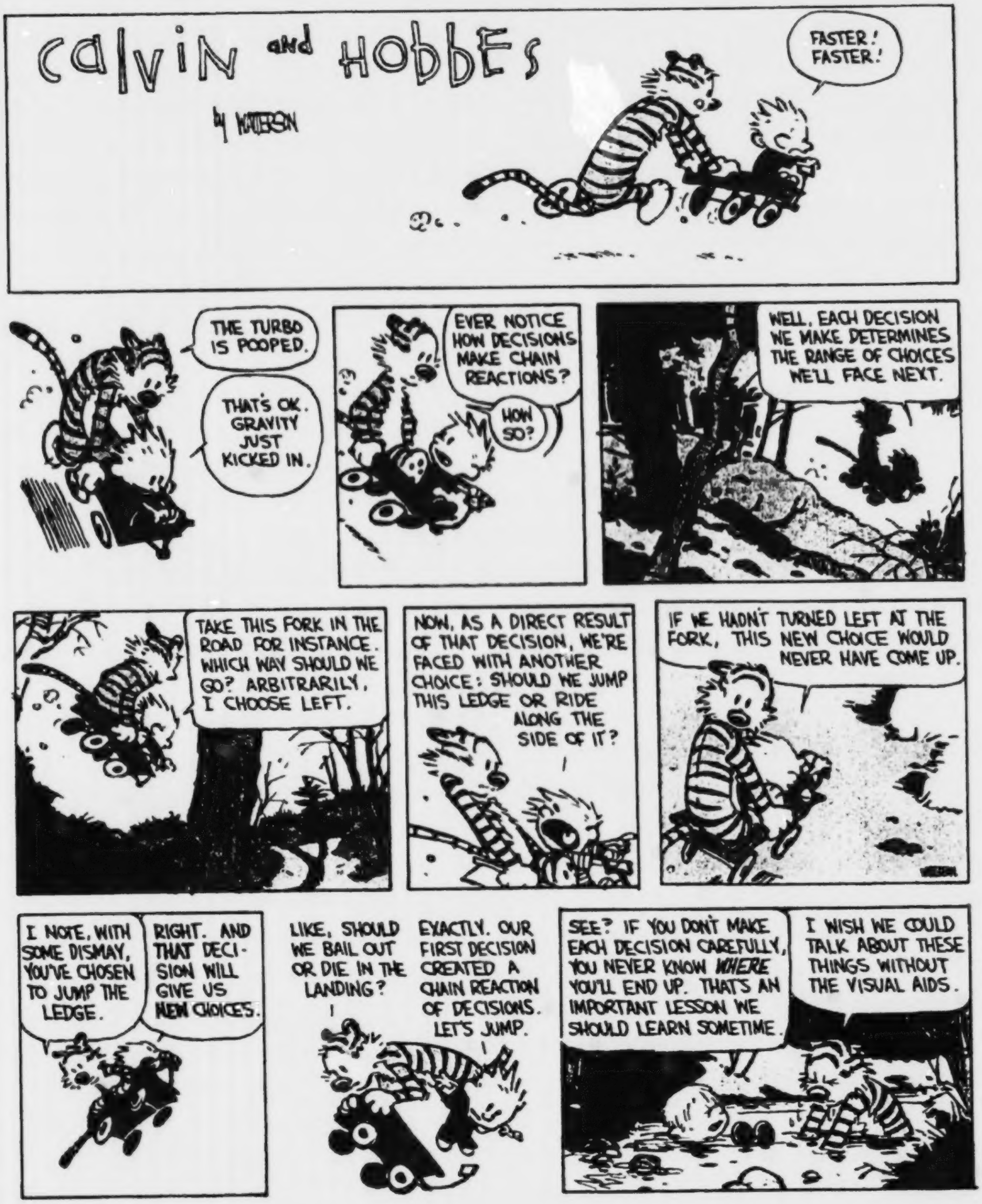
Calvin and HOBBES
by WATTERSON
FASTER! FASTER!
THE TURBO IS POOPED.
THAT'S OK. GRAVITY JUST KICKED IN.
EVER NOTICE HOW DECISIONS MAKE CHAIN REACTIONS?
HOW SO?
WELL, EACH DECISION WE MAKE DETERMINES THE RANGE OF CHOICES WE'LL FACE NEXT.
TAKE THIS FORK IN THE ROAD FOR INSTANCE. WHICH WAY SHOULD WE GO? ARBITRARILY, I CHOOSE LEFT.
NOW, AS A DIRECT RESULT OF THAT DECISION, WE'RE FACED WITH ANOTHER CHOICE: SHOULD WE JUMP THIS LEDGE OR RIDE ALONG THE SIDE OF IT?
IF WE HADN'T TURNED LEFT AT THE FORK, THIS NEW CHOICE WOULD NEVER HAVE COME UP.
WATTERSON
I NOTE, WITH SOME DISMAY, YOU'VE CHOSEN TO JUMP THE LEDGE.
RIGHT. AND THAT DECISION WILL GIVE US NEW CHOICES.
LIKE, SHOULD WE BAIL OUT OR DIE IN THE LANDING?
EXACTLY. OUR FIRST DECISION CREATED A CHAIN REACTION OF DECISIONS. LET'S JUMP.
SEE? IF YOU DON'T MAKE EACH DECISION CAREFULLY, YOU NEVER KNOW WHERE YOU'LL END UP. THAT'S AN IMPORTANT LESSON WE SHOULD LEARN SOMETIME.
I WISH WE COULD TALK ABOUT THESE THINGS WITHOUT THE VISUAL AIDS.

Figure 9.

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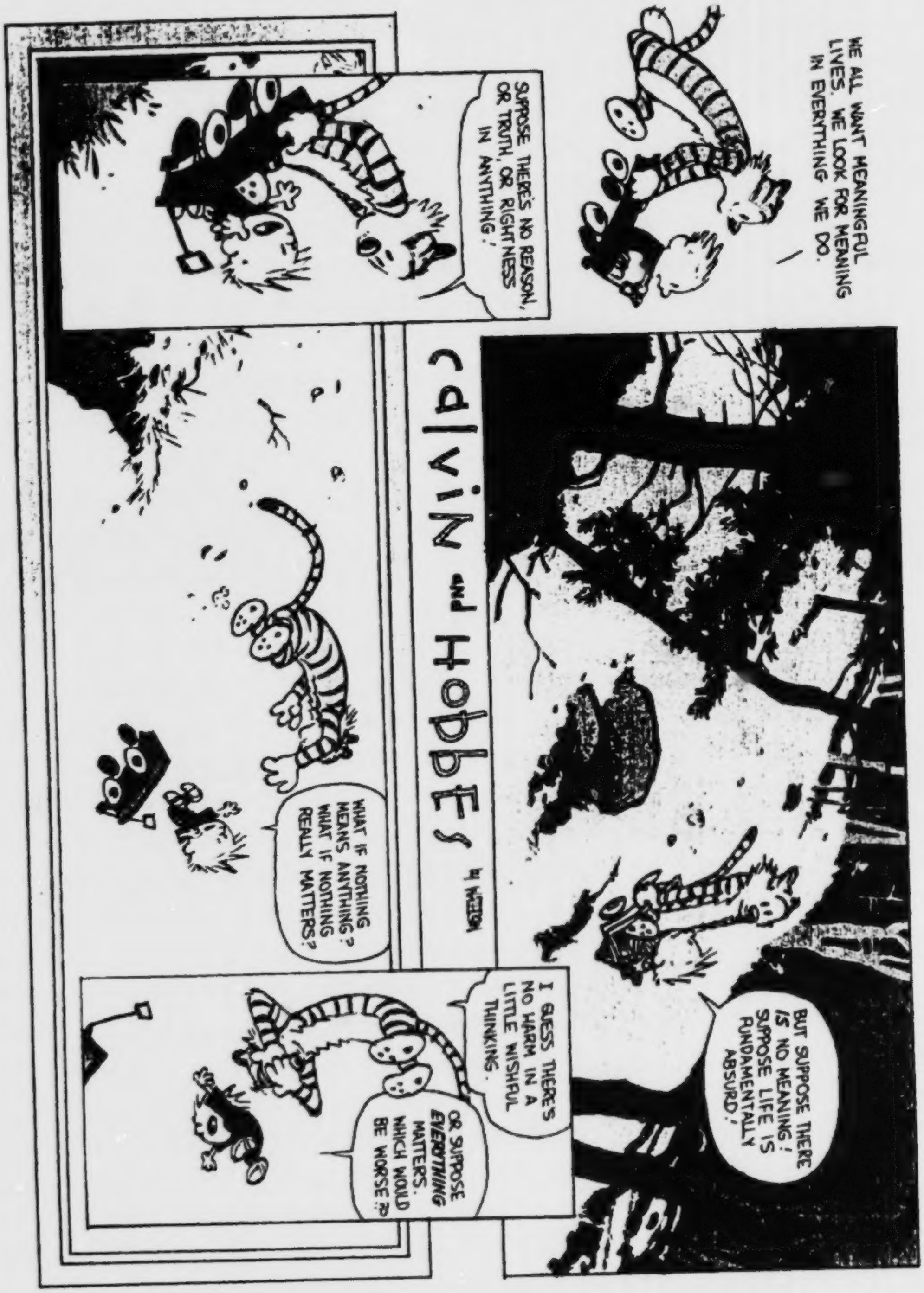
WE ALL WANT MEANINGFUL LIVES. WE LOOK FOR MEANING IN EVERYTHING WE DO.
BUT SUPPOSE THERE *IS* NO MEANING! SUPPOSE LIFE IS FUNDAMENTALLY ABSURD!
calvin and HobbEs by WATTERSON
SUPPOSE THERE'S NO REASON, OR TRUTH, OR RIGHTNESS IN ANYTHING!
WHAT IF NOTHING MEANS ANYTHING? WHAT IF NOTHING REALLY MATTERS?
I GUESS THERE'S NO HARM IN A LITTLE WISHFUL THINKING.
OR SUPPOSE *EVERYTHING* MATTERS. WHICH WOULD BE WORSE?!

Figure 10.

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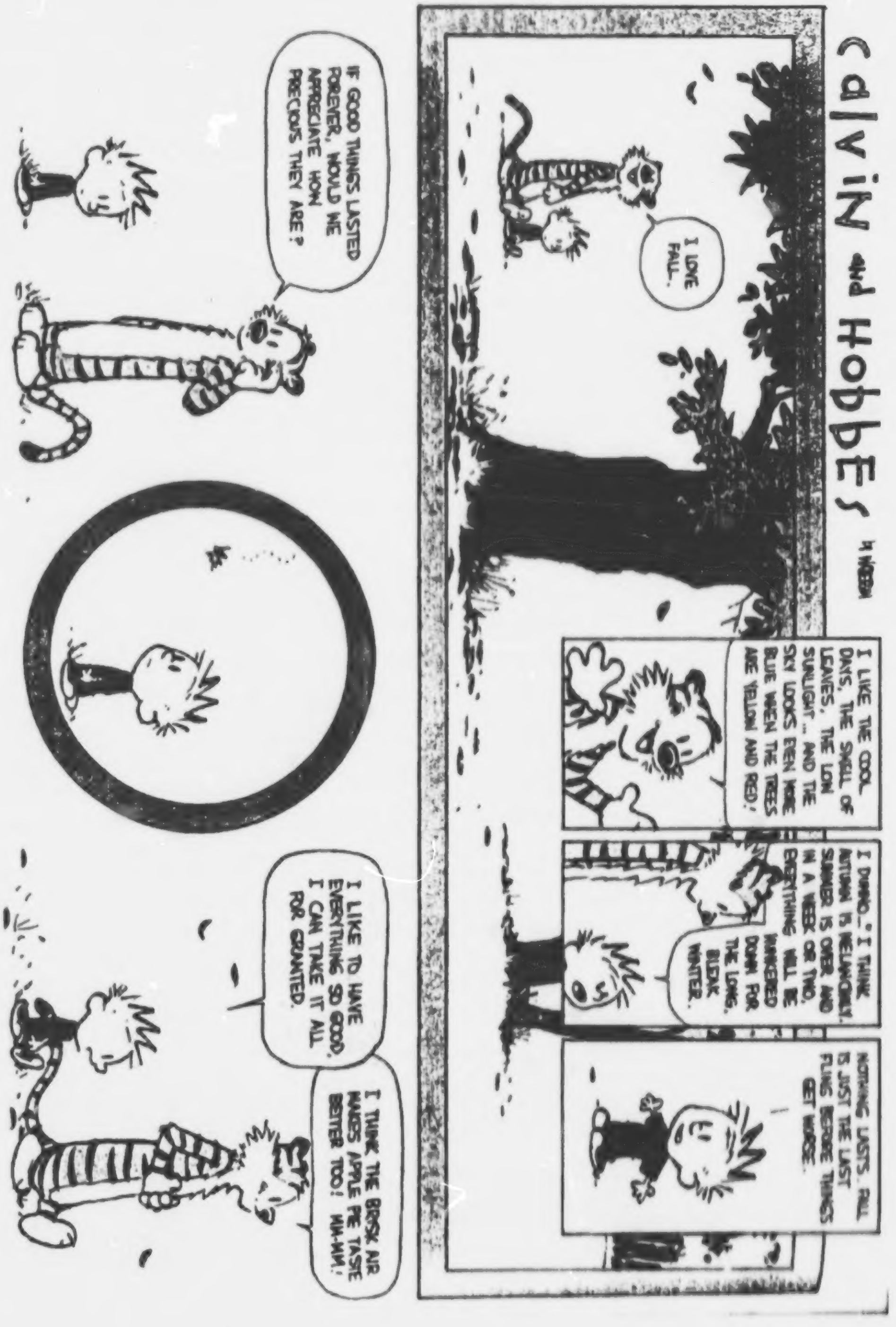
Calvin and Hobbes by WATTERSON
I LOVE FALL.
I LIKE THE COOL DAYS, THE SMELL OF LEAVES, THE LOW SUNLIGHT... AND THE SKY LOOKS EVEN MORE BLUE WHEN THE TREES ARE YELLOW AND RED!
I DUNNO... I THINK AUTUMN IS MELANCHOLY. SUMMER IS OVER AND IN A WEEK OR TWO, EVERYTHING WILL BE HUNKERED DOWN FOR THE LONG, BLEAK WINTER.
NOTHING LASTS. FALL IS JUST THE LAST FLING BEFORE THINGS GET WORSE.
IF GOOD THINGS LASTED FOREVER, WOULD WE APPRECIATE HOW PRECIOUS THEY ARE?
I LIKE TO HAVE EVERYTHING SO GOOD, I CAN TAKE IT ALL FOR GRANTED.
I THINK THE BRISK AIR MAKES APPLE PIE TASTE BETTER TOO! MM-MM!

Figure 11.

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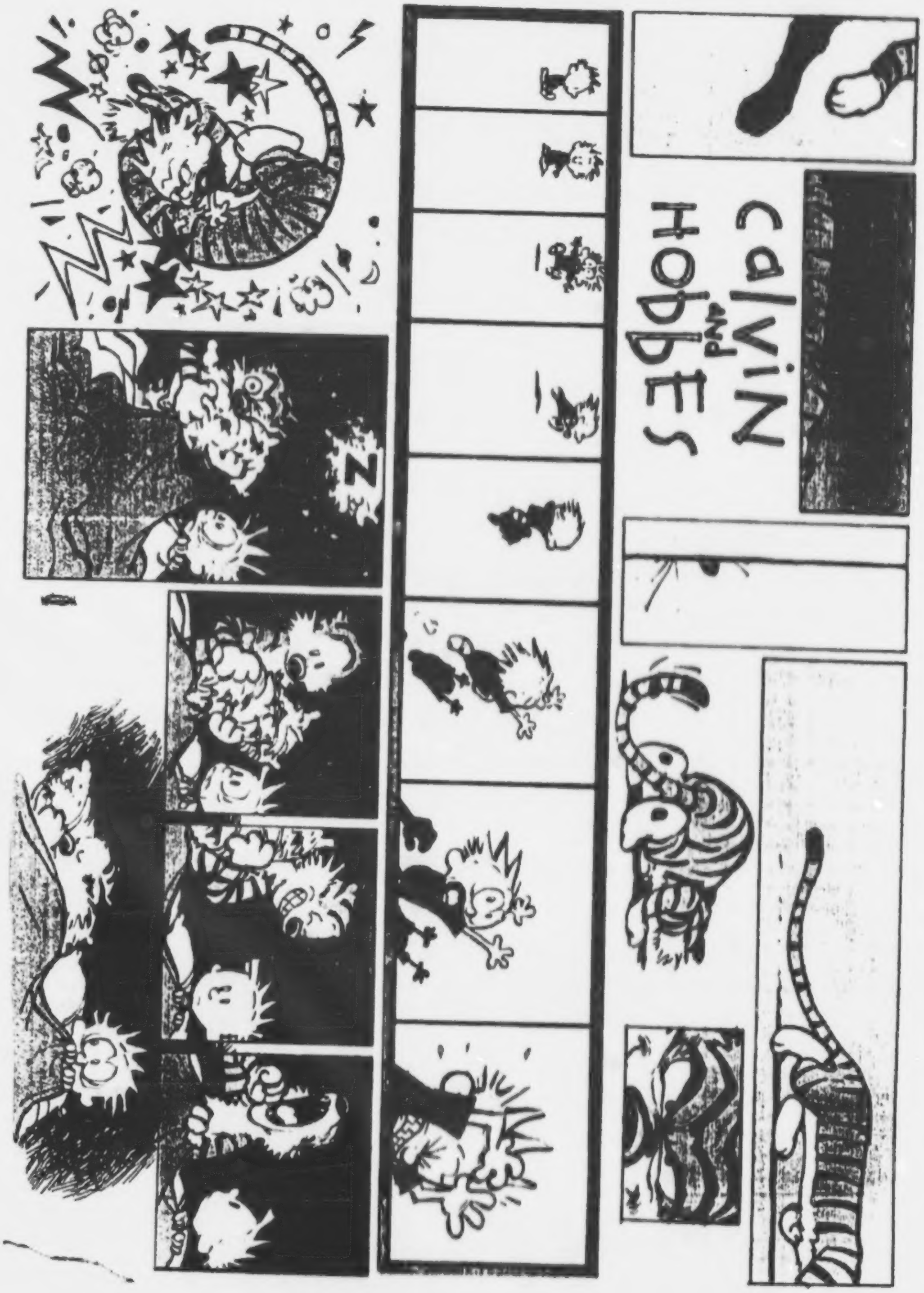
calvin and HOBBES
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Figure 12.

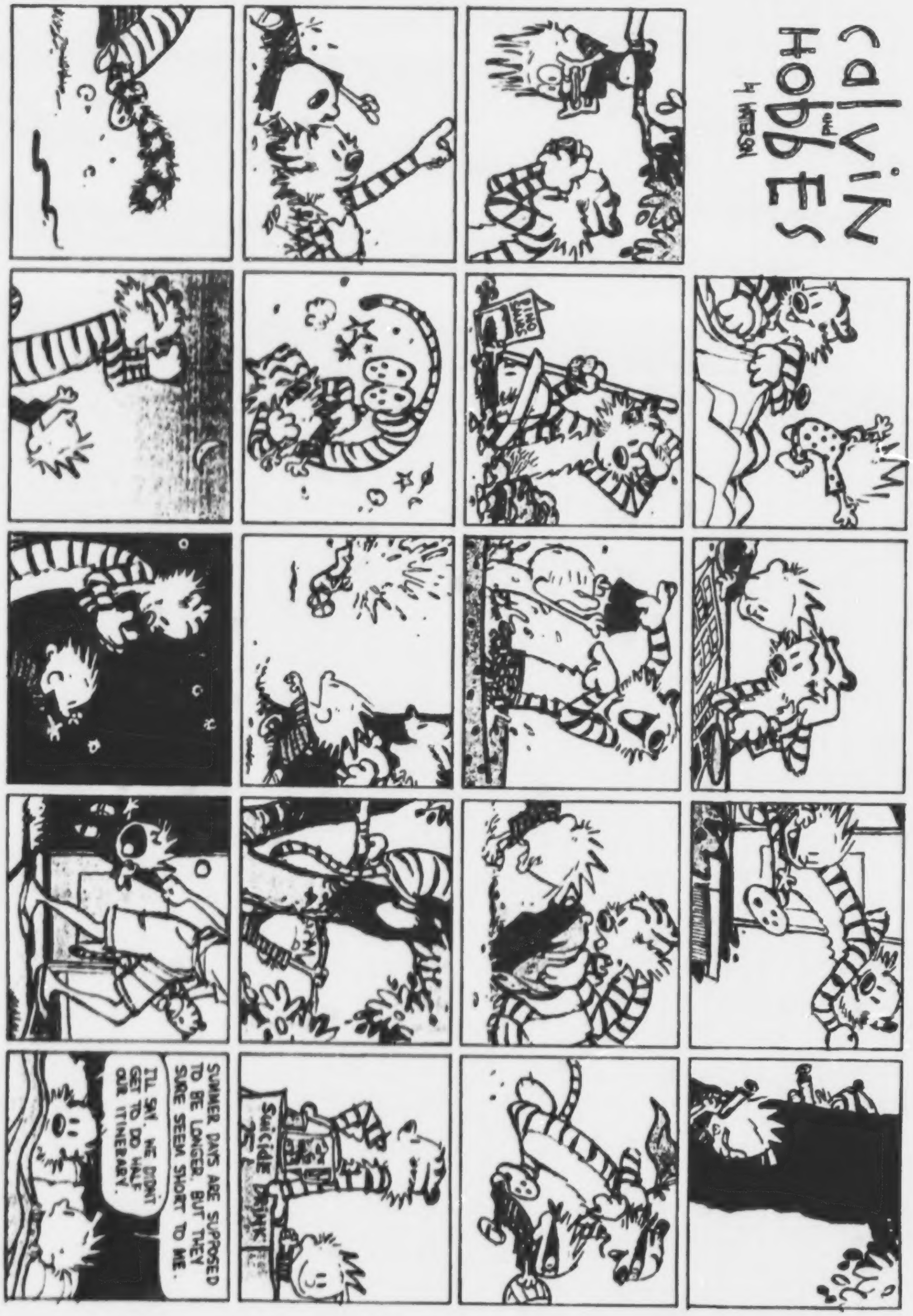
calvin and HOBBES
by WATTERSON
Suicide DRINK 75¢
SUMMER DAYS ARE SUPPOSED TO BE LONGER. BUT THEY SURE SEEM SHORT TO ME.
I'LL SAY. WE DIDN'T GET TO DO HALF OUR ITINERARY.

Figure 13.

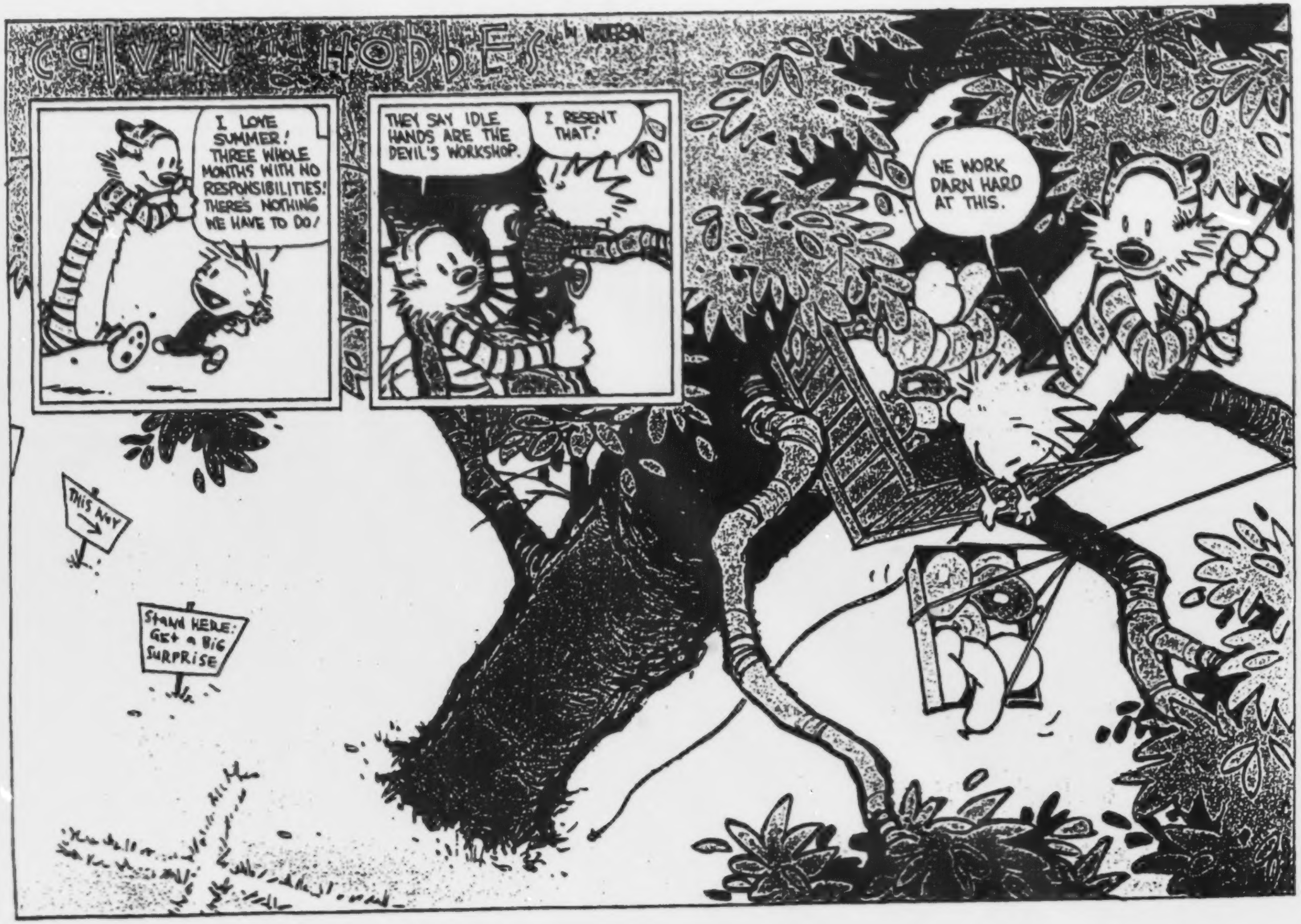
calvin and HOBBES by WATTERSON
I LOVE SUMMER! THREE WHOLE MONTHS WITH NO RESPONSIBILITIES! THERE'S NOTHING WE HAVE TO DO!
THEY SAY IDLE HANDS ARE THE DEVIL'S WORKSHOP.
I RESENT THAT!
WE WORK DARN HARD AT THIS.
THIS WAY
Stand HERE: Get a BIG SURPRISE

Figure 14.

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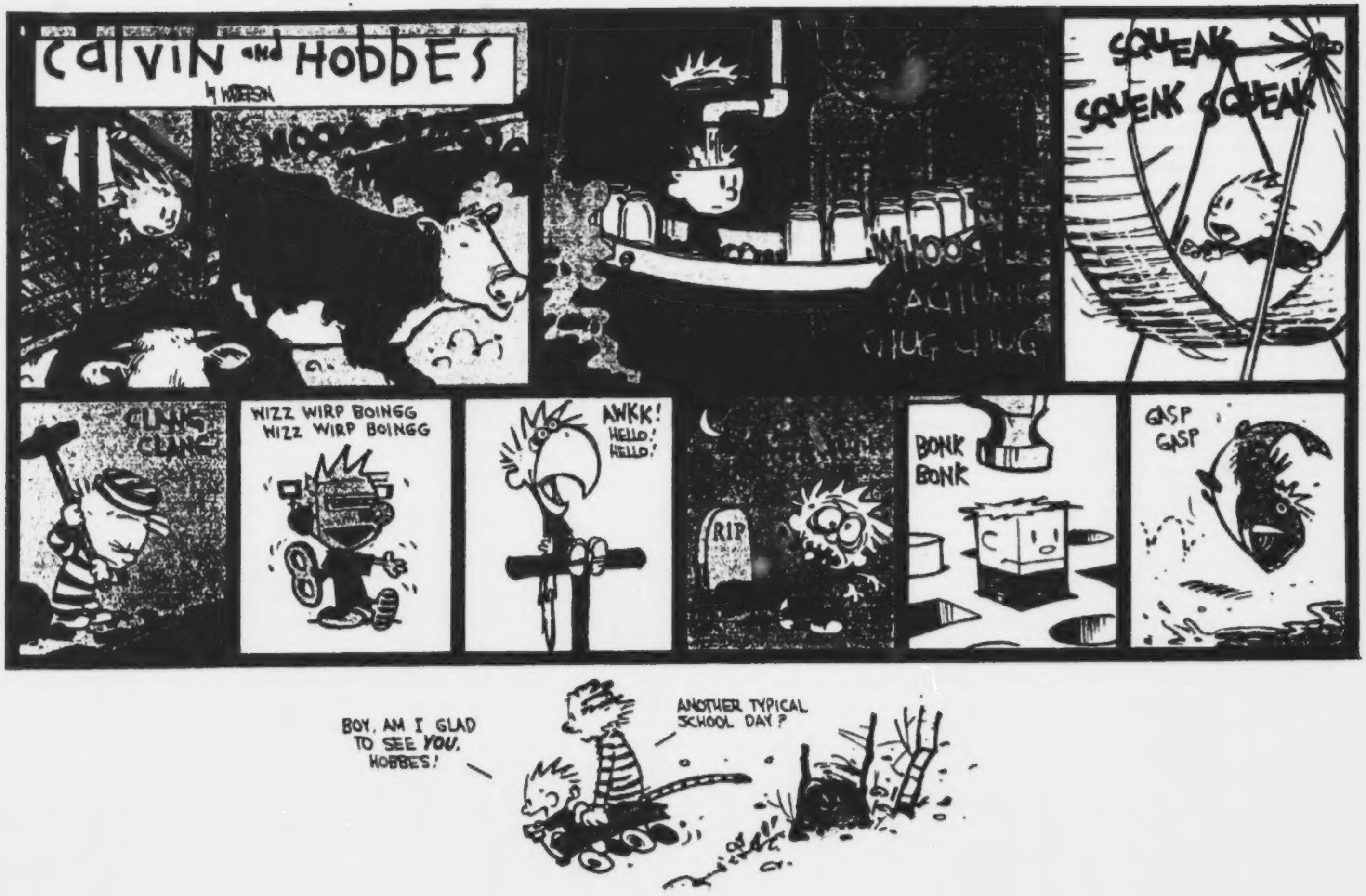
CALVIN and HOBBES
by WATTERSON
MOOO
WHOOSH
KACHUNK
CHUG CHUG
SQUEAK
SQUEAK SQUEAK
CLING CLANG
WIZZ WIRP BOINGG
WIZZ WIRP BOINGG
AWKK! HELLO! HELLO!
RIP
BONK BONK
GASP GASP
BOY, AM I GLAD TO SEE YOU, HOBBES!
ANOTHER TYPICAL SCHOOL DAY?

Figure 15.

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A Critical Vision of Gender in 2002 Campaign Ads

by
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Abstract:

This qualitative study explores how repetitive visual images in political candidates' ads reflect gender traits and issues, and analyzes how visuals reinforce stereotypes, break through them, or convey gender balance. Using 2002 Illinois campaign spots as texts, the author employs film theorists' mise-en-scene framework and rhetorical depiction theory to construct an interpretive approach for visual rhetorical analysis. Results reveal gender cross-over and balance, and suggest how visuals establish authenticity or deceit.

Introduction

Ever since the *Wall Street Journal* introduced the "glass ceiling" in 1986, the concept has been widely acknowledged by academics and journalists as an invisible but powerful barrier that allows women to advance only to a certain level (Carli & Helgi, 2001). Perhaps nowhere is that more evident than in American politics. The percentage of elected offices held by women ranges from 13 percent in the Senate to 27 percent statewide (whitehouseproject, 2002; CAWP, 2002). Considering the responsibility of the mass media to inform the voting public, the fairness of U.S. media coverage for male and female political candidates is highly debatable. From media consultants who bring gender strategies into the battle, to unbalanced news coverage, to news programs that slight female politicians and candidates despite policy or platform comparability, it can be argued that the mass media has a heavy hand in holding down that glass ceiling. It can also be argued that women still bear the burden of proving their political worthiness. "Women candidates are still held to a higher standard of establishing credibility than men," confirms political analyst Ann Lewis (Getlin & Evans, 1992, p. 16).

Over the past quarter century, the number of women running for U.S. Senate and gubernatorial offices, as well as statewide offices, has increased substantially, yet not in the victory category. Twenty-five percent of all women candidates won in the 1970's and 1980's (Kahn, 1996, p. 163). Kahn's study (1996) further offers some explanation for this standstill, revealing that women Senate candidates received less coverage than males, and more negative coverage. Character, personality traits and image issues favored male candidates and news articles tended to discuss male traits more frequently than female traits. In 2002 these ratios and reasons still hold: Women are 14% of the House of Representatives, and women represent only 11% of all guests on the Sunday morning political talk shows (whitehouseproject, 2002).

Thus it is critical that women candidates create their own messages through television ad spots that counteract biased media coverage and communicate strengths and capabilities clearly to voters. This paper is concerned with this most powerful medium controlled by the candidates themselves: the television campaign advertisement. Specifically, my research purpose is twofold: to identify how gender is represented in political television advertisements and to contribute to theoretical analyses that seek to comprehend the impact of the visual. Prior research has established that political television advertising has become the predominant method political candidates utilize to share political messages with the electorate. Further studies have argued that the visual components are the most prominent and effective argument in many political spots; they are an argument by camera work and are far more potent than verbal logic (Nelson & Boynton, 1997; Biocca, 1991; Richards & Caywood, 1991). To understand the force of the visual arguments, Osborn's theory of rhetorical depiction posits that recurring imagery imprints and amplifies attitudes in viewers (Osborn, 1986). This study asks what is being imprinted by candidates' ads? A final consideration in this analysis gives voice to the voter. A review of past research yields contradictory reactions to gender representations in political ads, however a trend appears that is disapproving of male gender traits (Eagly & Mladinic, 1989; Nesbitt & Penn, 2000; Hosoda & Stone, 2000) and approving of combined male-female gender traits (Jamieson, 1988; Sullivan, 1988; Hahn, 1998; Nesbitt & Penn, 2000; Carli & Hegli, 2001), thus I will seek to discover how contemporary political spots adapt these gender strategies.

Given the disproportion of women in elective office, and the often absent or misleading press coverage, it is important to analyze the repetitive visuals in women's political ads. These ads are the logical rhetorical venue for female candidates to convey strong, honest narratives that defy gender stereotyping or traditional masculine qualities. It is also prudent to analyze the visual rhetorical messages of their male opponents, to determine if they are balancing gender or even presenting feminized traits, to gain a better understanding of the context of the political battlefield. Thus, in this critical essay, I will examine fifteen political ads of male and female candidates running in statewide executive and legislative campaigns in Illinois in 2002. The offices sought by the female candidates were Illinois Attorney General, Treasurer, Secretary of State, and State Senator. The offices sought by the male candidates were U.S. Senator, Governor, Attorney General, Treasurer, Secretary of State, and Comptroller. All fifteen ads were videotaped by the researcher during evening primetime news and entertainment broadcasts in the Chicago market. Tapings were conducted during the final five days before the November 2002 election, a time-period known as the "blitz" for its density of political television spots when voter impression is crucial. Television viewers are likely to see many of these ads, and see them in close proximity. Thus it can be argued that they are both individually and cumulatively influential in impacting voter perceptions. A shot-by-shot visual analysis was then conducted to identify the gender representations communicated by the imagery.

Literature Review

Visual Rhetoric

It is important to acknowledge here that undertaking a purely visual analysis is a precarious task. When transcribing the visual material, my critical perspective and theoretical framework of rhetorical depiction through mise-en-scene elements led me to choices that guided my research. Some information was lost, other information was singled out. "The process of analyzing pictures," offers Diana Rose (2000) "is like a translation from one language to another." With the complexities offered by television, any translation usually entails a simplification. This ambiguity offers one explanation why research has yet to fully examine visual rhetoric. However, the genre of film has a substantial history in visual critique, of which "mise-en-scene" plays a leading role.

Of all techniques of cinema, and hence video, mise-en-scene is the one most commonly familiar: many of our most sharply etched memories of the cinema turn out to be an element of mise-en-scene (Bordwell & Thompson, 1979). Its French translation is "having been put into the scene;" it includes setting, lighting, costume, and the behavior of the figures; and it has the power to transcend normal conceptions of reality (p. 76). Settings frequently incorporate metaphoric props to advance the message, for instance an American flag, a front porch, or an office desk cluttered with books and documents. Costume elements may also convey meaning, for example casual versus business attire. Characters, too, are always graphic elements in the video, where their juxtapositions, gestures, and facials expressions offer broad clues and codes of meaning. Seldom do these elements appear in isolation; rather, states Bordwell, they orchestrate a final production that guides the viewer's experience from beginning to end.

Beyond spoken or written text, and music or sound effects, the visual components of video dominate the message in this medium. "Visualization is a powerful dynamic of memory and delivery in many media" (Nelson & Boynton, 1997, p. 97). Postman has said that "television gives us a conversation in images, not words" (p. 7). Although Biocca writes of the speaker/ listener dynamic in the political ad (p. 56), its *visual* voice also helps to establish a give-and-take relationship between the candidate and the viewer, drawing the viewer to infer, fill in the blanks, and take ownership of the message. In the *Rhetoric*, Aristotle described the enthymeme as the very body and substance of persuasion. Jamieson (1999) explains that enthymemes function by suppressing premises that are then filled in by members of the audience. Out of this complicity come conclusions whose impact is heightened by audience participation in their construction. In political ads, juxtaposition of images functions frequently as a means to semantically frame the messages. They unify and present a common interpretive frame for large numbers of social groups (Morreale, 1991). Unlike the commercial ad, political spots often present a documentary-like scenario that viewers enter and vicariously experience.

Rhetorical Depiction Theory

Today's political ad with its inherent qualities, in nearly all cases a tight thirty seconds in which to engage and persuade a variety of publics, is a fitting candidate for Michael Osborn's theory of rhetorical depiction. Because the television ad is often dodged, glimpsed, or passively viewed by the typical television audience, as an interruption in news or entertainment programming, by nature it must repeat key messages or imagery to impact as many viewers as possible whenever they might attend to it. Depiction is a significant, recurring form of address and under the theoretical framework of rhetorical depiction, the rhetorical force cast by the repetition of gender images in these television spots is illuminated. This theory emphasizes the importance of symbolic presentations of reality and audience perceptions. It fits the immediacy of television and its visual delivery. Osborn explains the power of depiction "is that it often possesses its audience at the moment of perceptual encounter, and thus insinuates itself into our consciousness, where it becomes difficult to dislodge" (Osborn, 1986, p. 80). He more eloquently describes the dynamic of depiction as when "premises rise into consciousness" (p. 97). When visual depiction is utilized, its delivery and meaning is cumulative in nature: typically there exists a repetition to constantly amplify the depiction. Television is a medium technically efficient in "imprinting" depictions on viewers in that its audio-visual qualities communicate to an immediate audience in hopes of affecting attitudes and actions on specific issues of the moment.

Gender Traits. Gender Bias

Numerous academic studies have determined the traits society assigns to gender, more commonly referred to as the values and roles society constructs as gender identification. A complete summary of traits would be exhaustive, but the following results approximate what most relatively recent studies have determined to be masculine and feminine gender identification. Males are independent, competitive, logical, skilled in business, and financial providers; females are emotional, gentle, graceful, concerned with appearance, and nurturing (Foss, 1996; Murray, 1996). Huddy and Terkelson (1993b) identified female traits as warmth, sensitivity, and compassion, and ascertained female issues as education, the elderly, the poor, and healthcare. They identified male traits as assertiveness, aggressiveness, and self-confidence, and pinpointed male issues as military crises and economic issues. Rosenwasser and Dean (1989) identified masculine tasks with military crises, terrorism, military defense, and commanding the Armed Forces. They found feminine tasks to be education, minority rights, the aged, and the disabled or handicapped. The environment and the American public were found to be neutral. Alexander and Andersen (1993) measured both issues and traits. They concluded female *issues* concerned daycare, the poor, health, education, environment and civil rights. Male issues concerned the military, foreign trade, agriculture, arms control, and taxes. Regarding gender *traits,* Alexander and Andersen (1993) identified females to be compassionate, liberal, honest, compromising, moral, effective, hardworking, one who balances family with office, and one who stands up for her beliefs. They identified male gender traits as conservative, tough, crisis-handling, emotionally stable, and decisive.

The importance of gender role presentation in political ads factors in two influential ways. First, given the persuasive rhetoric of advertising, gender representations may modify or develop viewers' opinions of the specific candidate, or of male or female candidates in general, regardless of policy positions. Second, viewers bring their own biases or preferences on gender roles to the television set, influencing their interpretations of the ads, and here academic evidence is complex.

Some studies have revealed, along with Robertson, Froemling, Wells & McCraw (1999), voter preference for candidates who are portrayed through the media in a gender appropriate manner. In Nesbitt and Penn's 2000 study, the most socially desirable qualities for women were: very protective, very willing to accept change, very aware of feelings of others – all qualities that ranked much lower for the typical man. The typical man's most socially desirable qualities were: very adventurous and very competitive – areas that ranked much lower for the typical woman. Certain studies supported male gender roles as preferable. In their 1989 study, Rosenwasser and Dean revealed that men were perceived most likely to win a presidential election, and that "masculine" characteristics were more important than "feminine" characteristics in any local, national or presidential election. Huddy and Terkelson (1993a) found more masculine traits (assertiveness, aggressiveness, self-confidence) were considered more beneficial than typical feminine traits (warmth, sensitivity, compassion) to deal with policy issues, and even to further women's interests in the world of politics, especially at the national level.

Other studies supported female gender roles as preferable. In Eagly and Mladinic (1989) both male and female respondents had evaluated women more positively than men, and more favorable traits were ascribed to women. Nesbitt and Penn (2000) found that both their male and female participants valued male characteristics significantly *less* than femal*e* characteristics. And Hosoda and Stone (2000) found a greater number of unfavorable attributes were used to describe men than women, creating a more negative masculine stereotype.

A number of studies also support combined gender roles. For example, one study revealed that women, in order to be influential, must combine agentic qualities, such as competence and directiveness, with communal qualities, such as warmth and friendliness (Carli

& Hegli, 2001). Carli (2001) reports that when women are perceived to be as competent as men, they are often seen as violating prescriptive gender role norms that require women to be communal, and as a result people, especially males, often dislike highly competent women and reject their contributions. In their replication of the1968 investigation of gender stereotypes by Rosencrantz et al, Nesbitt and Penn (2000) established that many stereotypes did not survive the thirty-year gap. While emotional qualities still were seen to differentiate the sexes, the typical woman was seen to have the same competence and capacity to be effective as the typical man. Nesbit and Penn (2000) noted this change in gender stereotypes, due to increased public exposure to women in greatly expanded roles, is predicted by virtually all models of the process of stereotype change.

Finally, Alexander and Andersen (1993) note that both women candidates themselves, along with their consultants, contribute to stereotyping by creating acceptable campaign images that capitalize on the public's biased expectations. However, these authors conclude that the female candidates' characters are being constructed and redefined to include the best of men's and women's capabilities. Indeed, this re-construction is evident. Senatorial candidate Dianne Feinstein's tough and caring approach represented a blend of the best of both male and female gender qualities, and she presented it with authority. Jamieson (1998) identified the "womanly narrative," in advertising messages. Hahn (1998) found that the emotional involvement rhetoric, employed by female candidates many more times than men, conveyed a deep commitment to action. Sullivan (1988) noted the extension of a different voice to political messages, and that candidate's television spots are especially significant because they represent the one dimension to campaign communication that is under the candidates' complete control.

While these studies contribute substantially to understanding the roles gender play in U.S. politics and indicate a blend of gender roles is a positive trend, they also raise more questions about the dynamic of gender representation and perception in political ads, especially as channeled through persuasive visuals. Thus, the gender dilemma remains a complex one, with the absence of women in higher political office as evidence of its repercussions. In his 2000 study, Koch summed up this ambiguity when he indicated that gender-stereotype effects on perceptions of candidates' issue position, competencies, and character traits may be more complex than previously appreciated.

Thus, to investigate the dominant visual rhetoric of current political ads, the following research questions were asked:

RQ1: How do the repetitive visual images in female and male candidates' ads reflect gender traits and issues?

RQ2: Do these gender traits and issues reinforce gender stereotypes or do they breakthrough to construct a gender-balanced image?

For the purposes of this study, prior research establishes gender as a psychological and cultural term for male or female, and bias or stereotyping as society's construction of traits and roles considered typical of females and males (Foss, 1996; Murray, 1996). Visual communication in political television advertisements is determined as the setting, characters, clothing, action, and behavior of the characters, as defined by film critics' mise-en-scene analysis (Bordwell & Thompson, 1974).

Method

I utilized the qualitative and interpretive research methodologies of unit and textual analyses. First, I transcribed the visual progression of each of the fifteen ads. Since it is impossible to describe everything on the screen, transcription decisions were based on the theory that gender roles are represented through the mise-en-scene elements of setting, characters, costumes, action, and the printed word appearing on the screen, known as a chyron in the video production trade.

Next, I conducted a unit analysis to determine how female and male candidates presented themselves to voters. As the "unit" of analysis is visually-based on the camera shot, when a camera switches content, a new unit of analysis begins.

To develop an identifying framework for the unit analysis, the process began with specifying gender traits and issues. I isolated the dominant stereotypical gender traits and issues referenced earlier in this paper, concluding the following: Feminine traits will be defined as compassionate and emotional, and nurturing and gentle. Feminine issues will be defined as the elderly, education, minority rights, the poor, healthcare, and character issues. Masculine traits will be defined as self-confident and aggressive, tough, and logical. Masculine issues will be defined as the military, crime, the economy, terrorism, leadership issues, business skills and finance issues. (Foss, 1998; Murray, 1996; Huddy& Terkelson 1993b; Rosenwasser & Dean, 1989; Alexander & Andersen, 1993).These dominant traits and issues were then matched with specific visuals, based on preliminary viewing of the fifteen spots and prior research consensus, resulting in the following identifying framework:

[See Table 1.]

Table 1.

Compassionate and Emotional (aged, unemployed, poor, health, minority issues)

Setting............In blue-collar and service workplace, closed factories, farms, health clinics. Props: prescription bottles

Characters........Elderly, non-white, common citizens, blue-collar, service and agricultural workers

Action............Touching people, friendly facial expressions

Nurturing & Gentle (education and family issues)

Settings............In home, park or school settings. Props: books

Characters........Family unit, children, teacher

Action............Interacting with children

Clothing...........Non-traditional business dress, or casual dress

Self-confident & Assertive (leadership)

Action............Handshakes, animated gestures

Characters........Addressing a group of adults

Verbiage**........Achievement or attack verbiage on graphics.

Tough (military, crises, crime and terrorism issues)

Setting..............Military imagery, prison or courthouse. Props: flag, fireman cap, cell

Characters..........Military, police, firefighters, uniforms

Logical (business skills and finance issues)

Setting..............Office, bank, government buildings

Clothing............Business attire

Characters.........Office associates

Action..............Working at office desk, attending to paperwork

**Verbiage specifying an issue also was coded for that issue.

In most cases, categorization was rooted in past research findings, for example a school setting indicated an education issue, or a person handling paperwork at an office desk indicated business skills. In a few cases where visuals did not "own" precise traits, the context was the determining factor. For instance, the action of a handshake in an office or workplace setting was designated as "self-confident and assertive," whereas the action of touching or hugging in a health clinic or school was designated as "compassionate and emotional." As the researcher is the main instrument in qualitative data collection and analysis (Wimmer & Dominick, 107), to secure confidence in the findings I based my approach and methodology on the aforementioned theories and a synthesis of multiple prior research results on gender traits and issues. I should also add that as a creative director in the advertising and publishing industries for many years, I have worked extensively with the rhetorical capacities of visual communication, and this experience contributes to my interests and interpretive work.

Textual Analysis

Within the fifteen ads studied, nine were produced by the male candidates and six were produced by the female candidates. Because the visual transcription for each ad is extensive, what follows are abbreviated summaries. Summaries are excluded for the two ads detailed in the Findings section of this paper. Gubernatorial candidate Rod Blagojevich's ad, "Time for a Change," focuses on his opponent attorney general Jim Ryan, criticizing the current administration with visuals evoking job loss, and promoting his agenda through visuals reflecting jobs, education and healthcare. In "People's Candidate," Blagojevich mixes male and female gender traits in this ad focusing primarily on education, with multiple visuals of classrooms, students, families, racial diversity, and blue- and white-collar workers. His opponent's spot, "Man of the People," seeks to reconstruct an image tarnished by ethics scandals of the current administration. Visuals depict Ryan in casual sweaters with African-American children, with women, with the elderly, and with male office workers. Current state senator Lisa Madigan, running for attorney general, created heavily negative spots. "Jail Cell" evokes the grainy black and white terror depicted in George Bush's "Revolving Door" spot, utilizing a constant jail cell visual juxtaposed with unflattering photos of the opponent, along with multiple negative chyrons. In Madigan's "Strictly Business," color pictures of a smiling candidate working in the office and multiple text press endorsements bookend an attack on her opponent, juxtaposing an unflattering black and white headshot with the wording, "Has learned NOTHING." Another negative Madigan spot, "Wrongful Prosecution," directs its grainy black and white visuals at attacking her opponent's past record as a county states attorney. Her opponent Joe Birkett counter-attacks in "Scandal," using grainy black and white photos of Madigan and multiple chyrons accusing her of wrongdoing, coupled with hyperactive production techniques that shake images and distort type. His second spot, "Court Scenes," attempts to diffuse "Jail Cell" with heroic imagery of the candidate addressing the court, propped with flags and police officers. In "Photo Album," incumbent state senator Kathy Parker presents a vision of her tenure with multiple images of her engaging the public, the elderly, the police and co-workers. She also makes an attack on her female opponent. Current state representative Dart, in his bid for the office of treasurer, uses "Shame" to attack incumbent Judy Barr Topinka's fiscal maneuvers. Graphics of wadded dollar bills accompany a smiling Topinka in submissive posture next to the current scandal-plagued governor. Kris O'Rourke Cohn's challenge of incumbent Jesse White as secretary of state yielded "In the Neighborhood," a talking-head static spot featuring Cohn wearing a double choker of fat white pearls, standing in an upscale neighborhood with American flags hanging from doorsteps. Her opponent, Jesse White, the only African-American candidate, bannered his achievements in "Tumblers and Truckers." The spot opens with the Jesse White Tumblers, young African-American male athletes, performing in a gym with shoulder pats from White. It moves to office images, the flag, a conference table with Caucasian men and women, and visuals of trucks juxtaposed with chyrons touting his tough response to an administration scandal. Incumbent comptroller Hynes' "Back to School" spot is all about education. It opens with "Trust" reversing strongly out of a black background, and alternates between Hynes working an adding machine at his desk to sitting outdoors among a diverse group of smiling young school children, with two on his lap, posing for what suggests to be a yearbook picture.

Findings

After completing the visual transcription for each ad, the identifying framework (see Table 1.) was applied. A total of 280 images contributed to this analysis. For the female candidates, 105 images were utilized; for the males, 175. All possible images were not included; a second person did not function as an interrater, and reliability was not measured. As a critic of visual rhetoric, I followed the methodology of "generative" rhetorical criticism (Foss, 1996) to develop and measure units of analysis that would best investigate my research texts and answer my research questions. This exploratory structure enabled me to gain the following insights: The leading gender trait for women was self-confidence and assertiveness, followed by nurturing and gentle, compassionate and emotional, tough, and lastly, logical. For men, the leading gender trait was nurturing and gentle, followed by self-confidence and assertiveness, compassionate and emotional, logical, and lastly, tough. Of these broad summaries, there are three significant findings. One, both males and females were equally as likely to display compassionate and emotional traits. Second, of all traits, women were far more likely to convey self-confidence and assertiveness. And third, of all traits, men were far more likely to convey nurturing and gentle imagery. Thus the ads' recurring imagery for both men and women candidates most powerfully imprints gender qualities that contradict stereotypical traits. A closer look at two select ads illustrates how the gender roles are depicted. I chose the following spots primarily because their execution offered clear examples of the way visual depictions establish gender cross-over. All non-Caucasion racial identifications are included in the transcriptions because minority race is defined by this study as a political issue. If at first reading these spots seem unusual for political ads, I reference the remaining thirteen spots previously outlined in this paper, noting my descriptions suggest similar gender representations and consistent visual formulas that can be easily read.

Poli Spot 1: Farms and Families

Visual Transcription

Judy Barr Topinka, the only incumbent and only Republican to win a statewide office, Treasurer, in the Illinois 2002 election, demonstrates a breakthrough persona through visual depiction: "Farms and Families" begins with Topinka sitting at her office desk wearing a black suit and sporting short red hair. There is an American flag in the background. Her gaze is cast downward at her work; she is moving paper. On-screen text reads, "Judy Baar Topinka." The second frame tightens in on a smiling man wearing a T-shirt with an American-flag image and what appears to be a fireman's hat on his head. The scene quickly switches to a middle-aged couple, a man with his arm resting around a woman's shoulder. They might be farmers from their work dress: he has a cap on his head, she is wearing a denim shirt and is speaking to the camera. Next, another couple appears in a setting with a field of grain in the background. The spot then switches to an interior shot of Topinka wearing a royal blue jacket with white shirt, making a broad welcoming gesture to blue-collar workers. The on-screen message reads, "Over 70,000 jobs." Next, in an outdoor farm-like setting, she stands talking with two couples. She is wearing a brown suit and is clasping her hands together in front of her. The screen reads, "$1 Billion for Agriculture." The following frame is a park-like setting and she is with young families, mostly women with toddlers. Some are holding babies. The screen reads, "Bright Start

& Promise." Next, an elderly woman addresses the camera, followed by a scene that places Topinka amidst hard-hat wearing male workers, with their hands all connected together in a "let's win one" gesture. The camera closes in on her joyful smile and head tossed back, looking upwards. The clasped hands are still included in this frame. We then see a young blond-haired mother outdoors, holding and talking to a blond male toddler. Next, Topinka is in same outdoor setting, crouching and talking to the standing toddler, gesturing with her hands. Next is a close-up of Topinka talking with another female toddler who might be Hispanic. Next, Topinka is walking with Caucasian and African-American women who are holding their young children. The final frame is still outdoors: ducks and geese are walking in the background. Topinka is kneeling and talking with an African-American boy. The screen reads, "Topinka. Illinois State Senator. Investing in Illinois."

Analysis

When I entitled this spot "Farms and Families," it was an inadvertent metaphor for the spot's gender balance. Agriculture, for long a male gender issue, has become more feminized as farmers have suffered severe economic setbacks. It also embodies character. Families, too, have become more centralized issues as working mothers and fathers share responsibilities and as family values platforms have surfaced across party lines. Thus the title suggests the gender integration Topinka achieves in her ad.

The opening visual is not what it appears to be, and from there the viewer is transfixed with juxtapositions and rapid image progressions. First we see "Treasurer Topinka" briskly working, in black tailored suit, at her office desk:

Topinka
ILLINOIS STATE TREASURER
Investing in Illinois

I. Web site image of actual frame from TV spot.
Note: over-printed type appears only on Web site.

The quick juxtaposition of the next shot, a young man smiling directly at the camera, creates a surrogate persona for Topinka. The man, wearing a white T-shirt with an American flag and what appears to be a costume fireman's cap, takes us into the world of "Judy." The following visuals depict frequent just-like-one-of-us imagery: She is on a farm with middle-aged couples; she is briskly gesturing to welcome blue-collar workers; she is romping in the park with young families; she is giving high-fives to hard-hat guys:

II. Web site image of actual frame from TV spot.
Note: over-printed type appears only on Web site.

There is a strong balance of logic and character appeals in this spot, creating a consistent blend of gender representation. The tight camera frames on the faces of Topinka's various publics connotes an openness and honesty. It is respectful of her constituents. The ethos she establishes through generous depictions of both workers and children functions to not only cue the viewers to her self-confidence and care, but to also identify themselves as one of Judy's pals. The generous camera depictions of the children transform traditional patriarchal imagery. They

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are not viewed as distant "others," nor grouped as a "type," but are featured individually, either in lively independent postures or interacting with Judy at eye level:

Topinka
Investing in Illinois

III. Web site image of actual frame from TV spot.
Note: over-printed type appears only on Web site.

Poli Spot 2: That's DurBin!

Visual Transcription

Incumbent democratic U.S. senator Dick Durban ran a single ad in the sampled viewing area and time period. "That's DurBin!" is a spot set in a school classroom instructing voters to not confuse him with republican challenger Dick Durkin. This ad opens in a classroom, featuring a young female Caucasian teacher. She is wearing pants and a bright blue shirt, and has long light-brown hair. She is pointing to two names written on a green chalkboard at the front of the class, DURBIN, and underneath it, DURKIN. We see the backs of the students' heads as she faces the camera. She holds up two fingers, and then the camera tightens in on one hand which underscores the B in Durbin. The camera closes in more tightly on her face, framing also the big B on the board. She is smiling. In the next frame, a young girl wearing a bright red sweater stands at the front of the class and smiles facing the camera. We read DURBIN on the board in back of her, and then the chyron "DurBin" also appears at bottom screen. We switch to an outside shot of African-American girls jumping rope. "DurBin" appears at bottom screen. The frame switches quickly to an African-American boy hanging upside down from the climbing bars. On the right side of the screen "DurBin" runs vertically. Finally we see candidate Durbin for the first and only time, standing on the school grounds surrounded by the students. The

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wording, "Dick Durbin, United States Senator," and "Vote Nov. 5" appears. The students then hold up various signs reading "Durbin."

Analysis

Dick Durbin promoted identification through clarifying the spelling of his name with this spot, but he also did a lot more. While the spelling lesson played out, the visuals imprinted him as an advocate for children, women, minority groups, and education. At the ad's beginning we are immediately involved with a surrogate persona for Durbin, a young female teacher dressed in pants and blue shirt who directly addresses the class, and consequently the camera, enlisting the viewer as student. Yet while we are drawn into the "nurturing and gentle" setting of the classroom, the room is set up in a traditional, positivist structure of rowed seats that distances teacher from student and establishes a hierarchy of power. There is no touching, in fact no interaction between teacher and student. Thus, the dynamic is positivist, too: The lecturer controls the audience to speak only when called upon. There is, then, a contradiction presented: While dominant visual roles suggest empowerment for children, women, and minorities, the television viewer's—and voter's—role is passive throughout the spot. A stench of dishonesty wafts in, like a forgotten cheese sandwich in the wardrobe. Returning to the beginning, the female teacher appears in the role of traditional lecturer and becomes the primary focal point. Looking quickly, we see the word "DurBin" on the chalkboard, juxtaposed as a counter focal point. Every succeeding image imposes a reactive role on the viewer. There is no visual dialogue with the viewer; there is only the appearance of the candidate's name and appearances of characters who "don't ring true" to the traits and issues they symbolize. Next we see a young Caucasian girl lecturing in same spot as the teacher, addressing the class—and the camera—head-on. "DurBin" reads from behind her. Next we see African-American girls, not in a role of power, but rather jumping rope in the playground. "D-u-r-B-i-n" appears below them in text. Finally we see a young African-American boy, not in front of a classroom nor even standing, but hanging upside down on the monkey bars, with "DurBin" running vertically in text alongside him.

I argue that this ad is dishonest in its implication and visually depicts power inequalities. It uses feminized gender imagery to persuade, not honestly converse. In the context of audience-as-students, it does not even "call on us" through interaction between teacher and student. It relegates the audience as passive receptacles through its choice of setting and static action. In contrast, Topinka's ad presents her physical and animated connection to each iconic character, and by extension, to the voting viewer. Candidate Durbin does not even appear with his props. Only at the very end does he pop in like a principal making a half-hearted appearance in the third-grade classroom:

IV. NOTE: Web site image, not actual frame from TV spot.

"That's DurBin" features examples of repetitive visual depiction amplifying cross gender traits and issues without depth of meaning. While it works to reinforce awareness of the candidate's name, the employment of thin photographic "stills" with associative candidate identification visually suggests a superficiality in core values and issues—and is a lost opportunity for Durbin to engage voters with substantive imagery that would communicate his democratic philosophy.

Discussion

This study contributes to our understanding of how political ad spots represent gender. Grounded on prior research measuring gender stereotyping and voter perceptions, the descriptive framework designed for this study proved to be a functional tool for identifying repetitive visual images in both female and male candidates' ads that reflected gender traits and issues. As noted earlier, although visual analysis is subject to researcher opinion and the nature of qualitative, rhetorical analysis is not scientific, my care to base the visual coding on consensus data from previous studies supports its significance as a contribution to the field of visual analysis. Through analytical frameworks of rhetorical depiction and mise-en-scene, the dominant recurring images were identified to be most persuasive. In this limited review, the analysis answers the question of how repetitive visual images in female and male candidates' ads reflect gender traits and issues, and how they reinforce gender stereotypes or breakthrough to construct a gender-balanced image. And it confirms research trends: A blend of masculinized and feminized qualities are being presented as appropriate and desirable. This study also advances that the test of authenticity can be measured by visual rhetorical analysis, as seen in the contrasting Topinka and Durbin spots. Pictures may be pretty and politicians may persuade. And at times they may very well work: U.S. senator Dick Durbin won a landslide reelection and treasurer Judy Barr Topinka was the only republican to win a statewide office in Illinois in 2002. Visual rhetorical analysis, however, offers a functional tool to illuminate meaning and ideology, and to unearth the deeper sense of social justice or power inequalities communicated *visually* by political ads to influence the electorate.

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Running Head: Personal Impact Assessment of Advertising Culture of "Whiteness": Facial Skin Color Preferences among Urban Chinese Women

Personal Impact Assessment of Advertising Culture of "Whiteness": Facial Skin Color Preferences among Urban Chinese Women

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ABSTRACT

Personal Impact Assessment of Advertising Culture of "Whiteness": Facial Skin Color Preferences among Urban Chinese Women

This paper examines a key determinant of female beauty among urban Chinese women: the preferred whiter facial skin tone color. By using Williams' (2000a) *Personal Impact Assessment*, it investigates how the use of vivid images on recent whitening skin care product television advertising helps shape both the individual and social values among urban Chinese women in relation to the Chinese proverb, "*One whiteness can substitute for three physical unattractivenesses* (一白遮三醜)."

INTRODUCTION

The concept of female beauty is illusory. The cosmetics industry aggressively uses the media to bombard eager consumers with "flavors of the month." Portrayals ostensibly establish and reinforce trends among the committed. The concept of female beauty is also multidimensional (Englis, Soloman, & Ashmore, 1994). It varies among nations and between different cultures, as well as over time.

Female adults, especially in urban cities of the Greater China, are willing to spend so much money in pursuit of the "perfect" skin for their faces. In particular, they want to have whiter facial skin tone, so that the connotations of "purity" and "beauty" from the product images would transfer to their self-identities. The recent *Advertising Expenditure* by AC Nielson shows that skin care is ranked the 7th product category for advertising budget consumption in Hong Kong market. In the first quarter of 2002, advertisers has spent US$26 millions on skin care products, which has 48% increase compared to last year's first quarter (AC Nielson, 2002).

SK-II, a Japanese brand which has business partnership with Maxfactor (a product of Procter & Gamble), positioned itself as the "queen" of skin care products since 1998 because of the invention of "Pitera[1]." With the use of celebrity endorsement and consistent brand image on its series of advertising campaigns, *SK-II* whitening skin care product line has succeeded in maintaining itself as the market leader. A recent poll conducted by *Amy Magazine* in May 2002 revealed that 38% of the Hong Kong women choose *SK-II* whitening mask as their most favorite whitening facial mask.

PURPOSE OF STUDY

This paper examines a key determinant of female beauty among urban Chinese women: the preferred whiter facial skin tone color. By using Williams' (2000a) *Personal Impact Assessment* technique, it also investigates how the use of vivid images on television advertising (i.e. the SK-II whitening skin care product advertisements) helps shape both the individual and social values among urban Chinese women in relation to the Chinese proverb, "*One whiteness can substitute for three physical unattractivenesses* (一白遮三醜)." By discovering both the conscious and unconscious levels of thinking among the whitening skin care product users, this paper helps understand how the "myth" of SK-II works in shaping the ideology of "whiteness" beauty in this social modality.

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[1] Pitera contains a natural collection of vitamins, minerals, amino acids and organic acids and helps restore the skin's natural rhythm by stimulating its renewal process. Its effects can only be described as astonishing. Women who have tried SK-II talk about their skin having become smoother, clearer, and more radiant. They agree that it gives them something infinitely precious - *the gift of re-birth* (http://www.sk2.co.uk).

CONCEPTUALIZATION

Proverb and Culture

Samovar and Porter (1995) suggested that cultural values often are derived from the larger philosophical issues that are part of a cultural milieu. Cultural values, for definitional purpose, are broad-based, enduring, and relatively stable organizational rules for making choices and suggesting preferences for a group of people (Rokeach, 1968). They are learned by society members.

A cultural belief in the idiomatic form contains the wisdom of a group of people and hands down traditions from one generation to the next. By using a few vivid verbal (and visual) images, an idiom or proverb captures what a group of people deem as important. Because an idiom (or proverb) carries cultural weight, it may impact on learned human behavior (Haskins and Butts, 1973). But to assess the extent of impact, the meaning of an idiom (or proverb) requires a study of its usage (Samovar and Zormeirer, 1995).

For this study, the common Chinese proverb, "*One whiteness can substitute for three physical unattractivenesses* (一白遮三醜)" is examined. The saying has constantly reinforced the notion that a white complexion is a preferred status over a dark and ugly one. It may explain, in part, the perception of female beauty in minds of Chinese people.

Nowhere is the apparent impact of this more visible than in urban cities in China, particularly in Hong Kong. The 1,092 square kilometer piece of China is a sophisticated international city. Still, its citizens retain the traditional ties to their agrarian cultural roots in the Pearl River delta of Southern China. Cantonese Chinese people, born into rich families, did not need to work in the productive, yet hot and sunny farmlands. Females from these wealthy families were not even allowed to have outdoor activities. As a result, they kept their skin a lighter skin tone. This explicitly reflected and implicitly reinforced that they belonged to the privileged, leisure class. So, whiteness became a higher social status symbol for Southern Chinese.

When Hong Kong was colonized by the United Kingdom, Caucasian British (gweilo) were also seen as having upper class privileges because they served as government leaders and/or high-level managers – desired economic states. Thus, the proverb, "*One whiteness can substitute for three physical unattractivenesses* (一白遮三醜)" took on a tangible meaning that whiter was, *de facto*, better in Hong Kong society. Wealth and privilege and the white skin that usually came from these conditions made it culturally clear that even a person had a big nose or pimples, could be compensated over those who had darker complexion. So, the proverb has taken on two distinct meanings: First, a person who has whiter skin color looks better; and second, a whiter skinned person is of a higher social status. This offers valuable insight into the contemporary standard of female beauty in Southern Chinese culture.

Symbolic Consumption

The Chinese proverb, "*One whiteness can substitute for three physical unattractivenesses* (一白遮三醜)," may also explain how the cultural gatekeepers, i.e. advertising, use the proverb to shape the ideology of the "whiteness" beauty in Chinese culture to persuade the consumption of their products (i.e. whitening skin care products).

Soloman (1989) argued that most work on symbolic consumption focuses on the decoding of product symbols by end consumers. He suggested the focus on the intermediate stages of symbolic transmission: the processes by which cultural products are filtered, modified, and sorted by cultural gatekeepers prior to decoding by consumers. In order to understand this "production site" on the use of vivid images to strengthen the "whiteness" value in urban Chinese cities, this paper, therefore, uses the recent *SK-II* whitening skin care products television advertisements to see how the symbolic transmission interacts between the advertiser and the end consumers.

Soloman (1989) also suggested that there are three structural components in a cultural production system. The first one is a creative subsystem responsible for generating new symbols/products. The second one is a managerial subsystem responsible for selecting, making tangible, mass producing, and managing the distribution of new symbols/products. The last one is a communications subsystem responsible for giving meaning to the new product and providing it with a symbolic set of attributes which are communicated to consumers. It would be interesting to see how *SK-II* created the myth of whitening miracle in the cultural production system.

Facial Skin Color Studies

There are some research studies on the beauty concepts in advertising recently. However, not many of them focus on the facial skin color. Research on Blacks in advertising has pointed out the inherent racist methods of marketing (Shepherd, 1980). Keenan (1996) found that black people shown in advertisements were "less black" than those in editorial photographs. Furthermore, Black women in ads were shown as having lighter complexions and features than their male counterparts (Keenan, 1996). Brown (1993) demonstrated that white people preferred looking at a light-skinned, keen-featured black woman than at those who had a classical African appearance. Black females also believe that black men find light in female skin most attractive. This leads to the idealization of lightness among the Blacks. Bond and Cash (1992) reported that blacks who desire a different skin tone favor being lighter over being darker. Hall (1995) suggested that the "bleaching syndrome" is a response by African Americans to assimilate into a society culturally dominated by whiteness even though such actions may cause psychic conflict.

Based on the evidence cited above in reference to universality of color preferences and the evidence that African Americans have preferences, there is a good reason to ask the research question, *what are the Chinese facial color preferences, especially among urban Chinese women*? One might surmise that there is an equally wide range of acceptable preferences for the yellow facial skin of Chinese women shown in Chinese language beauty publications.

In Mak's (1999) empirical study, an advertising photo of a Chinese woman's face was manipulated into six different HSL (Hue, Saturation, and Lightness) settings involving the addition and withdrawal of 10% for each factor. The seven final renditions (including the original) were grouped into 21 pairs. From each pair, subjects were asked to choose the one they preferred. The results showed universal preferences for lighter/whiter facial colors of the model between both sexes. To further test the reason behind this "whiteness" preference, subjects were asked to rate their attitude about the Chinese proverb, "*One whiteness can substitute for three physical unattractivenesses*

(一白遮三醜)." Those who held the proverb in higher regard also selected lighter/whiter skin tone photos.

Personal Impact Assessment

Although Mak's study (1999) is the first piece of research examining the facial color preferences among Chinese in advertising, the study did not really offer deep understanding about the symbolic consumption among the users in individual and social levels. Also, it did not evaluate the level of personal impact on consumers, a level often buried beneath conscious awareness.

Williams (2000a) designed a technique called "Personal Impact Assessment" (*PIA*) to access both conscious and unconscious processing of media imagery. The *PIA* technique applies Williams' Omniphasic Theory (2000b), which emphasizes a balance of rational and intuitive intelligences representing complementary, parallel cognitive systems that are independent, yet integrated, and equally significant to processing information.

According to Williams (2000a), "*PIA* can help the individual understand how mediated imagery generates associations that stimulate deeply held, personal values and beliefs in ways that develop unconscious memory and biases that subsequently motivate individuals toward specific behavior (p. 236)." This study, therefore, aims to use the *PIA* technique to explore what urban Chinese women think and how they feel about whitening skin care products. The study also examines the women's social relationships in regard to the Chinese proverb, "*One whiteness can substitute for three physical unattractivenesses* (一白遮三醜)" manifested in the visual imagery of *SK-II* television advertising.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Specific research questions guiding the study were:

1. Does *SK-II* use advertising to promote a culture of "whiteness" among female urban Chinese strategically? If so, how?
2. What do the *SK-II* whitening skin care product advertisements mean, on both conscious and unconscious levels, to female urban Chinese product users?
3. To what extent do the *SK-II* whitening skin care product advertisements shape and promote the importance of the "whiteness" skin beauty concept among urban Chinese women, in relation to their self-images, product images and social values?

METHODOLOGY

In order to answer Q1, two recent *SK-II* television commercials about whitening skin care products were chosen as the "image site" to see how *SK-II* used advertising to create the "whiteness" culture among female urban Chinese. Because of the language diversity, Cantonese version was chosen for the Hong Kong audience and Mandarin version was chosen for the other urban Chinese city people (i.e. in Taipei, Shanghai, Guangzhou and Beijing). Both of the TVCs were endorsed by Sammi Cheng, the pop star in Greater China market. She has lots of different images on stage when performing her show business. She has been the spokesperson for *SK-II* products since 2000, particularly for the whitening skin care products (Figure 1).

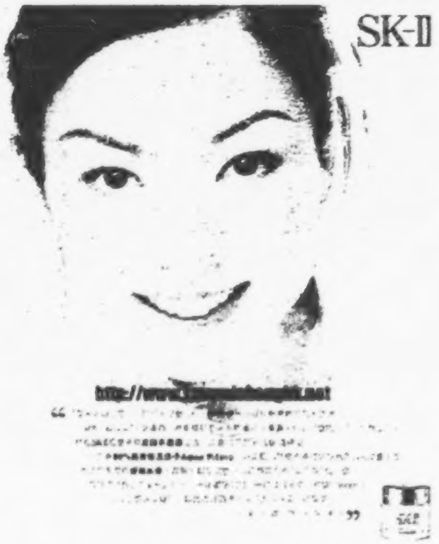

Figure 1: Sammi Cheng was chosen to promote SKII skin care products

In order to answer Q2, *PIA* technique was employed to discover the conscious and unconscious minds of the users. There are eight steps in *PIA* – 1) choose and view the image; 2) list primary words; 3) list associative words; 4) select most significant associative word; 5) list the most significant associative words; 6) relate associative words to an inner part of the self; 7) review the inner symbols; and 8) write the story or insight (Williams, 2000a).

Ten depth interviews were done by taking the *PIA* exercise (see APPENDIX A) and answering some follow-up questions (see APPENDIX B). All of the interviewees were current whitening skin care product female users from urban Chinese cities, such as Hong Kong, Taipei, Beijing, and Shanghai. Because of their unique backgrounds and interpretations of the TVC, each *PIA* exercise was reported individually as case study in this paper (see APPENDIX C). To facilitate readability, these individual case studies were categorized as 1) brand loyalty group; 2) brand switchers; 3) advertising knowledgeable group; and 4) non SK-II myth believers.

In order to answer Q3, analysis on the interviewees' *PIA* exercises was included to see if there were any common threads on their self-images, product image,,and social values related to the Chinese proverb, "*One whiteness can substitute for three physical unattractivenesses* (一白遮三醜)," manipulated in the *SK-II* TV ads.

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"Whiteness" Advertising Culture and *SK-II*

A recent informal interview with a former advertising practitioner who had served her client, *SK-II*, in Taiwan revealed how *SK-II* was operating the cultural production system (Soloman, 1989). After conducting tons of consumer research to get some insights from Chinese women in Greater China, the advertising practitioners came up with a creative strategy on building *SK-II* as the "queen" of skin care product. The themes of the series of advertising campaigns were consistent and easily decoded – the benefits of facial problem removal demonstrated by the female Chinese celebrities on using the *SK-II* products, with the emphasis on the scientific formula. The dark red corporate color signifies the reliable, elegant and classy product image (Figure 2).

SK-II

Figure 2: *SK-II* corporate logo

In order to resonate the feelings of the target audiences, the creative directors asked the celebrities to pretend like "chatting" with the audiences in front of the camera. They usually integrated some slang phrases to create the close feeling so that it helped the audiences easily remember the effectiveness of the products, like a miracle for changing their facial problems. When *SK-II* had new product launch, it put lots of emphases on bombarding the target audiences by television commercials to increase the reach and frequency within a short period of time.

There are big ideas of the two chosen TVCs of the recent *SK-II* whitening skin care products. The first one was the Cantonese version (Figure 3). The colorful curtain setting detonates the black forehead, reddish and yellow facial that are not perfect for white skin. After her use of the new *SK-II* whitening facial mask that contains "Pitera," her face turns much whiter. Sammi feels very satisfied, as her skin is now as white as "tofu dessert."

Figure 3: Cantonese Version (captured from TVC)

The second TVC was the Mandarin version (Figure 4). Sammi is sitting in a very nice, comfortable living room to introduce the three steps on whitening face. The first step is by using the "facial cloth" which contains Pitera. The second step is by using the

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"gray bottle" which can remove dark spots on skin. The last step is by using the "red bottle" which is a UV product. Sammi's facial expression and body movement echo what she says, "I don't need to change anything anymore!" (because the three products from *SK-II* finally turn her face white and she is so satisfied with the white image). It makes a big contrast with her images on stage performance.

Figure 4: Mandarin Version (captured from TVC)

It is also interesting to take a look on the "legend" of *SK-II* from one the official websites (http://www.sk2.co.uk/our_legend1.htm):

> "For almost a generation, Japanese women have known a secret...
>
> Their secret is contained in the revolutionary effects of *SK-II*: a skincare range combining the magic of nature with the advances of science.
>
> A Japanese monk visiting a sake brewery noticed that the brewery workers had extraordinarily soft and youthful hands. Even an elderly man with pronounced wrinkles on his face possessed the silky smooth hands of a young boy.
>
> After a series of experiments a team of skincare scientists discovered the secret; a clear, nutrient-rich liquid that could be extracted during the yeast fermentation process. They named the liquid 'Pitera', which, over time, has become known as the 'Secret Key' to beautiful skin."

Such "legend story" provided some insights about the mythology of *SK-II* skin care products – it is a "miracle" and "secret key" to beautiful skin!

Personal Impact Assessment Exercise

In order to unmask the myth of *SK-II* whitening skin care product advertising, Williams' (2000) *PIA* technique was employed to investigate the conscious and unconscious levels of the minds of the female urban Chinese product users. Ten individual case studies were reported in the following groups: 1) *SK-II* brand loyalty group; 2) brand switchers; 3) advertising knowledgeable group; and 4) non SKII myth believers (see APPENDIX C).

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To demonstrate the PIA exercise clearly, Figure 5 illustrated how one of the 10 interviewees followed the eight steps of the exercise:

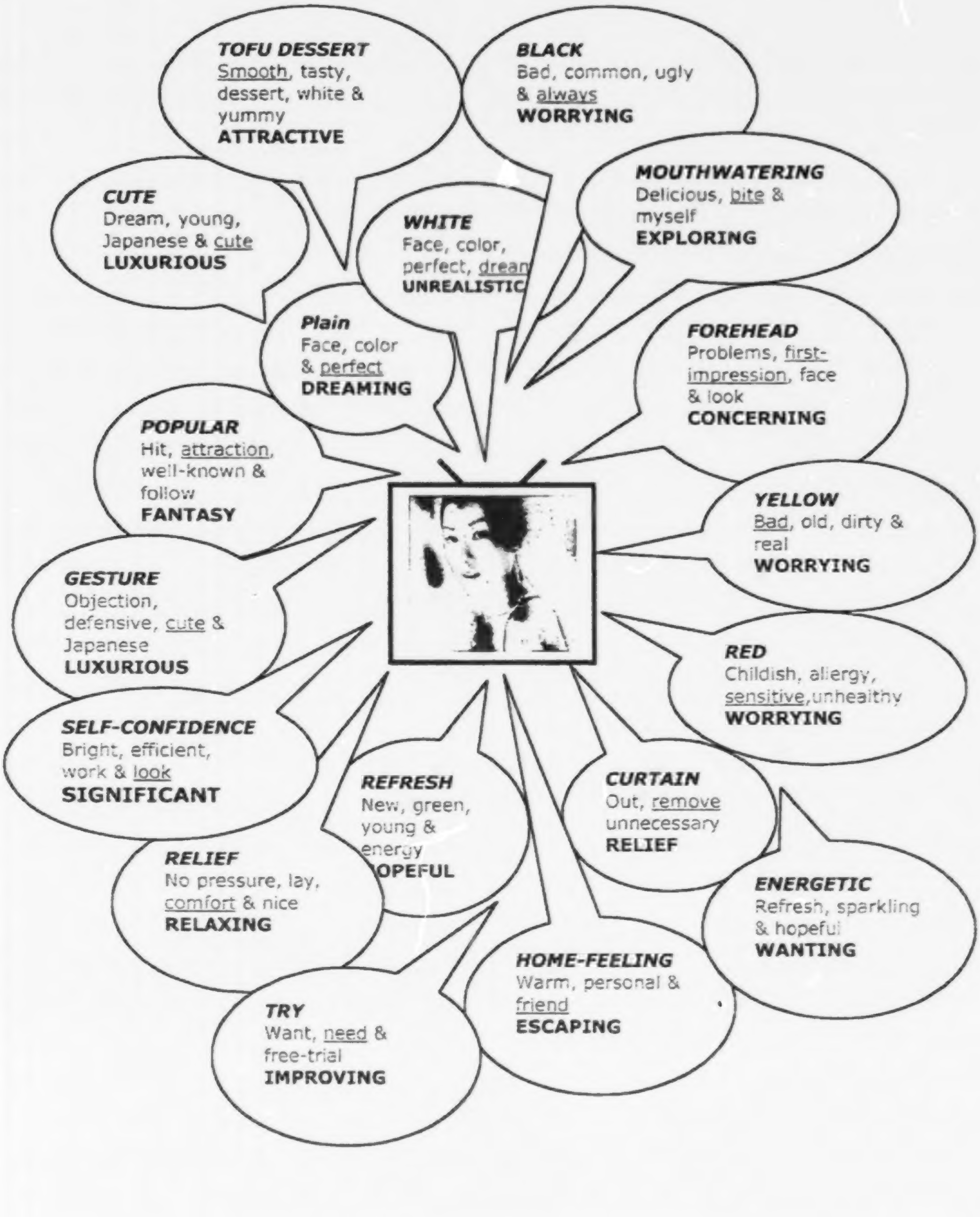
TOFU DESSERT
Smooth, tasty, dessert, white & yummy
ATTRACTIVE
BLACK
Bad, common, ugly & always
WORRYING
CUTE
Dream, young, Japanese & cute
LUXURIOUS
WHITE
Face, color, perfect, drean
UNREALISTIC
MOUTHWATERING
Delicious, bite & myself
EXPLORING
Plain
Face, color & perfect
DREAMING
FOREHEAD
Problems, first-impression, face & look
CONCERNING
POPULAR
Hit, attraction, well-known & follow
FANTASY
YELLOW
Bad, old, dirty & real
WORRYING
GESTURE
Objection, defensive, cute & Japanese
LUXURIOUS
RED
Childish, allergy, sensitive, unhealthy
WORRYING
SELF-CONFIDENCE
Bright, efficient, work & look
SIGNIFICANT
REFRESH
New, green, young & energy
OPEFUL
CURTAIN
Out, remove unnecessary
RELIEF
RELIEF
No pressure, lay, comfort & nice
RELAXING
ENERGETIC
Refresh, sparkling & hopeful
WANTING
HOME-FEELING
Warm, personal & friend
ESCAPING
TRY
Want, need & free-trial
IMPROVING

Figure 5: Visual demonstration of Joyce's *PIA* exercise

■ Primary words ■ Associative words & the most significant (underlined) ■ Inner self

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Joyce[2] was a human resources officer working in Hong Kong. She regarded herself as a very dark skin person and thought that she was perceived much older because of her skin color. Joyce was not a SKII brand loyal person because the price was too high. Joyce believed that white skin tone color could substitute for rough skin, flat nose, and small eyes. Her level of advertising knowledge was little.

Figure 5 illustrated how Joyce practiced the PIA exercise. In each callout bubble, it contained the primary word, associative and most significant words, as well as her inner self symbol after watching the Cantonese version of the SK-II whitening skin care product TV ad. The red word represented the primary word that Joyce described the significant part of the image, i.e. POPULAR. The blue words were the associative words Joyce pondered the word POPULAR, i.e. hit, attraction, well-known, and follow. And she underlined attraction as her most significant associative word. Joyce, therefore, identified it as her inner **FANTASY** self in green.

Below is the insight from Joyce after doing the *PIA* exercise:

> "The action of removing the colorful curtain reminds me that we need to remove all the obstacles in front of us. We need to have an optimistic, open mind in facing difficulties rather than just worrying it in an unrealistic manner. Then we can keep ourselves young and sparkling all the time. Though the product is popular, it is quite expensive so I will find another cheaper product to use. The TV series remind me the importance of whiteness - clean image to everyone rather than black forehead, yellow and reddish face. But my in-born dark skin is a fact. So there of course is a dilemma because I know whiteness product to me is useless. I couldn't be as white as Sammi on the TV commercial!"

DISCUSSION

Primary Words and Product Image

Overall, the primary words generated by the interviewees can be basically classified into 1) feature-oriented; 2) feeling-oriented; and 3) image-oriented (Table 1). The primary words revealed how *SK-II* image was in the minds and hearts among different types of whitening skin product users.

In terms of feature-oriented primary words, most of the interviewees would recall the visual components of the two TVCs, such as "face", "forehead", "curtain", "home", and "mask". However, they had different feelings towards the TVCs. For the brand loyalty and brand switcher groups, they would come up with more positive feelings like "comfortable", "clean", "reliable", "safe" and "relaxing". In contrast, the advertising knowledgeable group and the non-believers had more negative feelings toward the TVCs, like "exaggerating", "overwhelming light", "untruthful", "artificial", "superficial" and

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[2] Surprisingly, all interviewees preferred to use their real names in the study, as they would like to share their learning process in the *PIA* exercise with other readers.

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"complicated".

Feature-oriented	Feeling-oriented	Image-oriented
Face, forehead, curtain, home, and mask	Comfortable, clean, relaxing, exaggerating, overwhelming light, untruthful, and complicated	Reliable, safe, artificial, and superficial

Table 1: Primary words generated by ten interviewees

Associative Words and Self-images

The associative words, however, related to what things or values were important to the individuals. Interestingly, those brand loyalty users had many words related to physical beauty, such as "skin", "beautiful", "slim", and "attractive" while the non-believers generally did not have any associative words related to physical beauty. Their most significant associative words were, for example, "plain", "energetic", "enlighten", "feign", "lifestyle", and "positioning".

The brand switchers and the advertising knowledgeable group had a mix of feelings in their associative words. They had some positive moods like "cute", "effective", "sparkling" and "confident". They also wanted some promising rewards besides pursuing physical beauty, like "family", "money", "children" and "friend." And yet, they were realistic in knowing that "challenge", "opportunity", "man-made", "advertising", "first impression", and "attraction" are what they possess in reality. A summary is shown in Table 2.

Brand loyalty users	Non-believers	Brand switcher & Ad knowledgeable group
Skin, beautiful, slim, and attractive	Plain, energetic, enlighten, feign, lifestyle, and positioning	Cute, effective, sparkling, confident, family, money, children, friend, challenge, opportunity, man-made, advertising, first impression, and attraction

Table 2: Associative words among different whitening product user groups

Inner Self Symbols and Social Values

The common threads on inner self symbols among the interviewees were: They wanted to have a "change" in their lives so that it could satisfy their "fantasies", "desires", "dreams", and "wants" to become more "confident", "charming", "cheerful", and "simple". And yet, they found that they were so "vulnerable" in looking for that change. It correlates to what they described in their insights from the *PIA* exercises – they understood that those whitening skin care products would not really change their facial skin color become really white. But they would keep pursuing this "changing" feeling by using the products. Such dilemma could also relate to the belief in the Chinese proverb, "*One whiteness can substitute for three physical unattractivenesses* (一白遮三醜)." For those who did not believe in the proverb (i.e. BJ and Qing), they had more focused, less dreaming inner self symbols compared to others (see APPENDIX C). The believers, actually, were trying to meet the standards on how others thought about them.

In summary, the *PIA* exercise helps understand how the creation of "whiteness" myth in the *SK-II* whitening skin care products advertising affects the individual and social values among the urban Chinese women in this study. The manipulation of the advertising by emphasizing the importance of the Chinese proverb, in particular, has greater impact on the brand loyalty users, brand switchers, and the advertising knowledgeable group. Pursuing whiter skin tone color is equal to making a great change in their lives, though many of them understand that it is very difficult in reality.

Visual Literacy

It was difficult to interpret the *PIA* results in a systematic, consistent way because each individual case was so unique. However, most of the interviewees had an "a-ha" type of response. They found that they understood what they really wanted in their lives more after finishing their *PIA* exercises. As Williams (2000) points out, "Most individuals can take a quick look at the image and logically reject the idea that using the product will fulfill their needs in the way that is illustrated. Through this rejection a person may feel s-he has understood and countered the effect of the ad. But when they find themselves unwittingly standing at the counter purchasing the product over and over again, they must begin to consider that their rational evaluation and rejection, in fact, did not work and that something else was at play (p. 241)."

The *PIA* exercise, therefore, provided a chance for the interviewees to learn their intuitive, visual intelligence. It was interesting to know that even those interviewees who have advertising background (and some of them even are working in advertising industry) found themselves so vulnerable in front of advertising "intrusion." Visual literacy, therefore, must be taught in Journalism and Communication schools because the students are the "cultural gatekeepers" in the future. If they do not have visual intelligence in looking at visual images, all of us would be controlled by the manipulative advertising messages from the large corporations. Consumer education on visual literacy through the use of *PIA* is recommended. This paper is not trying to position *PIA* as an anti-consumerism advocacy tool but at least, it could offer a chance for the consumers to "stop", "look" and "listen to their hearts (intuitive visual thinking)" before purchasing any kinds of products.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Although this study represents only ten current whitening skin care female product users and cannot be generalized to a larger population, it offers excellent qualitative insight. This study provides evidence on which to base future work exploring the interaction between production site, audience site, and cultural meaning. Future research based on a representative sample of women in different Chinese cities should explore thoughts and emotions of different groups of product users in a systematic comparison of such quantitative results with extensive qualitative study would contribute both to own understanding of the advertising's role in the culture of whiteness and Chinese cultural biases toward light toned skin.

In addition, a sample on how urban male Chinese to have their *PIA* assessment could be obtained to offer some insights on how the "whiteness" culture gives an impact on the opposite sex. This would be very interesting to see if this "myth" also shapes how they regard the female beauty in Chinese culture.

Intuitive processes and experiences are extremely personal, idiosyncratic and often based on unconscious memory and cognition (Bechara and Damasio et al., 1997). As this study uses a qualitative method on interpreting *PIA*, future research could create a profile on the primary and associative words as well as the inner self symbols to see if there are any "patterns" emerged from the individuals. Ratings on each word could be given to the participants to see if there is an overall positive or negative perception on the mythology of the cultural consumption system.

Besides the whiteness on facial color, future research ideas could look at other beauty issues related to urban Chinese females, such as pore-less refined skin, slim figure and big breasts to see how they are manipulated by the imagery mediated communication industries, filtered in self-images and social values. With the use of *PIA* and the creation of word profiles, we may also see if there are similar patterns among beauty products in terms of mythology.

CONCLUSION

This paper gives a deeper understanding of how the cultural consumption system works through the manipulation of advertising message related to cultural and social values. The use of *PIA* technique helps deconstruct the "myth" of the whiteness advertising culture by understanding the conscious and unconscious levels of thinking of the product users. From this study, the "vulnerability" of the whitening skin care product users gives us a warning about the influence of cultural gatekeepers in shaping our self-images and social values. Teaching the practice of intuitive, visual intelligence, in an equal and complementary manner with rational intelligence through *PIA* could be one of the self-reflective therapeutic methods for consumer education. As "seeing is believing" (Barry, 1997), we should educate consumers on how to become more visual literate while being bombarded by advertising messages every day. By knowing one's inner self better, it could unmask the beauty illusion and refocus the consumer needs to other meaningful ways.

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APPENDIX A – PERSONAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Thank you for your participation in this study. Now, you're first going to complete an exercise. You'll be viewing a TV commercial and please follow the eight steps one by one while completing the exercise. Enjoy the discovery journey!

1. **View the Image:** View the RealPlayer TV commercial that I just sent to you. You should view the TV commercial at least three times and feel free to use the "pause" button if you wish. Here're are some tips that could help your viewing process:

- Looking at all the images from the TV commercial and letting your eye and mind wander around the different parts.
- Notice the light, its direction and contrast and feel.
- Notice the primary points of interest and where they are placed.
- Notice lines and curves and basic design elements and how they help or hinder your eye movement.
- Notice the grain or dot structure and surface pattern.
- Notice the range and saturation of tones and/or colors and how they affect your feelings.
- Notice how the image makes you feel.
- Does it draw you in or keep you out?
- Does it tell a clear story or does it stimulate your imagination to develop your own ideas or stories?

2. **List Primary Words:** List a single word that describes each of the significant parts of the image (the TV commercial)--character, place, things, colors/tone, feelings, etc.—in a column on the left side (Primary words) of page 2. You can list as many single word as you can. The single word could be a noun, an adjective, a verb and whatever. Put one word for one sentence in that column.

Primary words (for Step 2 only)	Associative words (for Steps 3 & 4)

3. **List Associative Words:** Look at each of the descriptive words (in Step 2) you have written, one at a time. Start with the first word and write other words (word associations that come into your mind as you ponder the first word). Finish all of the associations for the first word before you move on to the next word. I suggest that you list at least three associative words for each primary word. More is fine.

For example,

(Primary word)	(Associative words)			
Happy	Love	Warmth	Energy	Food

4. **Select Most Significant Associative Word:** When you have completed the list of word associations, go back to the first **primary** word and think about its associative words over in you mind. Again, start with the first primary word and its associative words and go down the list. Try to intuit (first come in your mind) which is **the most significant associative word** for each primary word and underline it. Do not over think this; just say the associative words to yourself until one seems most significant. Do this for each group of associative words you have listed, one at a time. There are no right or wrong answers. Simply pick the word that seems most appropriate to you as you read the words.

For example,

(Primary word)	(Associative words)			
Happy	Love	Warmth	Energy	Food

↑

(most significant associative word)

5. **List the Most Significant Associate Words:** Make a second list of the underlined "significant associative" words. Keep them in the same order in which they are found on the primary list. Leave enough space for each word on the list (i.e. one word for one sentence). You can simply copy and paste the underlined "significant associative" words onto this page.

Significant Word Association (from Step 4 to Step 5)	My Inner ____________ Self (for Steps 6 & 7)

6. **Relate Associative Words to an Inner Part of Yourself:** Look at each word in the "significant word association" list (from Step 5) and consider what part of your inner self that word represents or symbolizes. Write that part of yourself to the right of the "significant word association." To identify the inner parts of yourself, it may be helpful to say "my inner______ self". i.e.: my inner *vulnerable* self, my inner *trusting* self, my inner *fantasy* self.

For example

Significant Word Association	My Inner ____________ Self
Energy (that I underlined before)	My inner *motivating* self

7. **Review the Inner Symbols:** Look over these word symbols of your inner self and see if there is some clear connection or story about yourself that arises from the interaction of the inner-symbols from the image (TV commercial). This story or connection or meaning may be just a simple feeling or it may come to you in a flash or as an ah-haaa-type response. It will often reveal the inner conflicts, emotions, values, or feelings that are behind your personal, intuitive attraction to the image.

8. **Write the Story/Insight:** Write down the story or insight. Think about how it applies to your attraction to the image or how it offers insight about your own life relative to the image. Consider how the association of the product with fulfillment of these inner desires and values might establish unconscious biases and motivations. Consider how these unconscious motivations might influence your desire for the product or for things associated with the product (i.e.: attraction, physical perfection, love, power or confidence) and how this desire might influence you to adapt your behavior in some way.

APPENDIX B - FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS

Thank you for participating this study. Below are some questions that I would like to know more about you personally. Please type out your answers next to the questions.

1. Have you used *SK-II* whitening products before?
2. Are you currently using *SK-II* whitening products?
3. If not, what brand(s) are you using? And why you don't use *SK-II* whitening products?
4. Tell me what's your impression on *SK-II*:
5. How many years have you been working?
6. On average, how much money do you spend for skin whitening (including product, facial treatment in beauty center, and taking pills) per month?
7. How often do you read those women magazine within a week?
8. Have you seen the TV commercial that you viewed before? If so, how many times have you seen it?
9. Your skin tone is (underline the most appropriate answer):

   very white   *fairly white*   *neutral*   *fairly dark*   *very dark*

10. Compared to other women in your city, your skin tone is (underline the most appropriate answer):

    very white   *fairly white*   *neutral*   *fairly dark*   *very dark*

11. Do you believe the Chinese proverb, "one physical attractiveness can substitute for three physical unattractivenesses." If so, what are the three physical unattractivenesses in your mind?
12. How does this proverb apply to your life (work/love/friendship/family, etc)?

Once again, thank you so much for your time and effort. I appreciate it very much!

APPENDIX C – INDIVIDUAL PIA RESULTS

a) SK-II Brand Loyalty Group

1. Hannah's Profile:

City of origin: Taipei
Occupation: Coffee shop owner
Advertising knowledge: Very little
Brand loyalty: *SK-II*
Impression on *SK-II*: Reliable and suitable for skin, highly recommend
Skin tone: Neutral
Compared to others: Fairly white
Three physical unattractivenesses: Freckle, wrinkle and ugly face
Applicability of the proverb: Improve appearance, more attractive to men and make myself happier!

Hannah's PIA exercise:

Primary Words	Associative & Most Significant Words	Inner Self Symbols
Clear	skin wording light	Changing
White	beautiful clean comfortable happy	Confident
Transparent	see through breakable secret	Secret
Direct	easy-to-follow understandable	Simple
Comfortable	sleep coffee warm sports	Powerful
Buy	money happy confidence relax	Surviving
Sammi	superstar thin tall perfect skin	Dreaming
Skin	whitening pimples wrinkles freckle	Charming
Thin	pretty charming attractive confident	Confident
Perfect skin	beautiful makeup charming	Confident
'Blackhead' nose	ugly remove clean facial	Disgusting
Fresh	simple comfortable cool	Energetic
Miracle	magic pop-star witch minority	Unbelievable

Hannah's Insight:

"I want to change many things in my life – appearance, lifestyle, connection with other people, etc. After the change, I will become more confident and comfortable. The whitening product that I am using now is not only for changing my skin tone color, but also help changing my inner self – become more confident and charming!"

2. Carmen's Profile:

City of origin: Hong Kong
Occupation: Office lady, part-time student
Advertising knowledge: Very little
Brand loyalty: *SK-II*
Impression on *SK-II*: Effective
Skin tone: Fairly white
Compared to others: Fairly white
Three physical unattractivenesses: Fat and short
Applicability of the proverb: My mom always uses it to describe me!

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Applicability of the proverb: My mom always uses it to describe me!

Carmen's PIA exercise:

Primary Words	Associative & Most Significant Words	Inner Self Symbols
Character	Attractive Beautiful Happy	Wanting
Place	Warm Comfortable Silent	Surviving
Colors	White Red Yellow Black	Wanting
Tone	Soft Sweet angry	Controlling
Feelings	Sweet Happy Sad	Controlling
Clothes	Colorful attractive soft	Wanting
Decoration	Bright Clean Warm	Surviving
Body	Slim Fat tall	Wanting

Carmen's insight:

"I was attracted by the product after reading the TV. White is very important to a Chinese Woman. White can cover all the ugly part on your face. I 'm a Chinese woman, so I need it too. Also, It can build up my confidence. I trust this product because this TV is very persuasive to me. The Place and Decoration is what my dream house like. It is very comfortable and clean. The lighting is very bright. Also the character feels very enjoyable and happy to her life. I WANT it too."

b) Brand Switchers

3. Cathy's profile:

City of origin: Beijing
Occupation: Full-time student (Working on TV before returning to school)
Advertising knowledge: Little
Brand loyalty: *SK-II*, Lancôme, and Olay
Impression on *SK-II*: Expensive and but not worthy
Skin tone: Fairly dark
Compared to others: Fairly dark
Three physical unattractivenesses: Rough skin, too skinny or too fat
Applicability of the proverb: I think I'll look better in having white skin so I'm trying to make myself look whiter in everyday life.

Cathy's PIA exercise:

Primary Words	Associative & Most Significant Words	Inner Self Symbols
Whiteness	Clean, beauty, wedding, hospital	Desiring
Relaxing	Holiday, hobby, family, home	Nostalgic
Fast-paced	Vigor, springiness, busy, energy	Motivating
New face	Happy, new lifestyle, opportunity	Desiring
Change	New, strange, challenge, opportunity	Curious
Convincing	Safe, reliable, truth, trusting	Vulnerable
Clean	Comfortable, relaxing	Tired
High-tech	Reliable, Modern, Convenient	Vulnerable
Complete	Safe, guaranteed, convincing, finish	Vulnerable

Cathy's insight:

"I personally prefer white skin because whiteness means clean and innocent to me. I don't know exactly why I think in this way, most probably is the influence of mass media. However, my skin is kind of dark. So, I always dream of white skin. In the TV commercial, whiteness is the theme – the furniture, the wall, the celebrity's clothes and the package of the products. I think I am interested in the TV commercial "by nature."

Because my skin color is far from the color I like, I really want a "change." I think this is another keyword in the ad besides whiteness. The celebrity is famous for her regular changes of the makeup, clothes and hairstyles. At the first sight of her, the word comes to my mind is "change." However, in the end of the ad, she said, "I know I don't want to change anymore (after her skin turns white)." This quote gave me a sense of relaxing – a sense of "finally, I found what I really want in my life" - something like that. This indicates a beginning of a new life to me – many new things, new feelings that I've never experienced before.

Another thing I'd like to relate the TV commercial to my personal experience is that I've tried many brands of whitening products before to get my skin whiter. But I don't think any of them really works. So, I'm kind of vulnerable. Truly reliable technology is very important for me when choosing whitening products. So I have deep impression about the complete and high-tech whitening package, and I think it's really reliable.

The last thing deeply impressed me is the cozy, warm and homely environment in the ad. The homely environment reminds me of my home. Since I am now far away from my family and the current study and work are stressful, a home-like environment makes me feel relaxed, comfortable and warm."

4. Cat's Profile:

City of origin: Hong Kong
Occupation: Graphic designer
Advertising knowledge: Some
Brand loyalty: No…brand switcher – *SK-II*, Neutrogena, Origin, Olay & Biotherm
Impression on *SK-II*: Not effective and expensive
Skin tone: Neutral
Compared to others: Fairly dark
Three physical unattractivenesses: Unclear contour line face, uneven facial color and fatty face
Applicability of the proverb: Honestly, I don't care how "white" my friends are but I prefer my male friends look darker because I think whiteness on a man's face looks weak. If my female friends were not white, I wouldn't think that she is not pretty or not looking good. But it will sometimes affect my job decision, as I wouldn't choose those jobs that require me to exposure under the sun!!

Cat's PIA exercise:

Primary Words	**Associative & Most Significant Words**	**Inner Self Symbols**
Sammi	Trend, Pretty, Famous, Trustworthy	Fantasy
SK-II	Effective, Famous, Popular	Trusting
White	Pure, Pretty, Angel	Fantasy
Cute	Happy, Laugh, Cheerful	Entertaining
Comfortable	Home, Relax, Relief	Hoping
Home	Warm, Safe, Relax, Sleeping, Sweet	Trusting
Scientific	Reliable, Effective, Safe, Proof	Positive
Expensive	Money, Guarantee, Confidence	Motivating

Cat's insight:

"I found that I feel quite happy and reliable with the product though it is not really effective to me. I believe that the ad of the product can meet my desire to "become white" and that's why I do not only pay attention to the content but also trust what it says. Also, the character in the ad is very important and can really catch my attention because she's regarded as the lead of the trend that I hope to follow. By the way, I just realize that I am a positive person but in fact, many people think that I look cool or sad or depressed. Maybe it's because of my dark skin that leads to such misperception. Or maybe I just hide my inner self."

5. Joyce's profile:

City of origin: Hong Kong
Occupation: Human Resources Officer
Advertising knowledge: Little
Brand loyalty: Fancl
Impression on *SK-II*: Expensive, luxurious and popular
Skin tone: Very dark
Compared to others: Very dark
Three physical unattractivenesses: Coarse skin, flat nose, and small eyes
Applicability of the proverb: People say I am older because of my dark skin. My boyfriend will say those white girls are beautiful and look at them. My best friend is a white girl.

Joyce's PIA exercise:

Primary Words	Associative & Most Significant Words	Inner Self Symbols
Popular	Hit, attraction, well-known, follow	Fantasy
Plain	Face, color, perfect	Dreaming
White	Face, color, perfect, dream	Unrealistic
Black	Bad, common, ugly, always	Worrying
Forehead	Problems, first-impression, face, look,	Concerning
Yellow	Bad, old, dirty, real	Worrying
Red	Childish, allergy, sensitive, non-health	Worrying
Curtain	Out, remove, unnecessary	Relief
Mask	Treatment, recover, help, comfort, confidence	Comfortable
Home-feeling	Warm, personal, friend	Escaping
Refresh	New, green, young, energy	Hopeful
Relief	No pressure, lay, comfort, nice	Relaxing
Energetic	Refresh, sparkling, hopeful	Wanting
Kawaii (cute)	Dream, young, Japanese, cute	Luxurious
Cross-arm gesture	Objection, defensive, cute, Japanese	Luxurious
Self-confidence	Bright, efficient, work, look	Significant
Tofu (soy) dessert	Smooth, tasty, dessert, white, yummy	Attractive
Mouth-watering	Delicious, bite, myself	Exploring
Try	Want, need, free-trial	Improvement

Joyce's insight:

"The action of removing the colorful curtain reminds me that we need to remove all the obstacles in front of us. We need to have an optimistic, open mind in facing difficulties rather than just worrying it in an unrealistic manner. Then we can keep ourselves young and sparkling all the time. Though the product is popular, it is quite expensive so I will find another cheaper product to use. The TV series remind me the importance of whiteness – clean image to everyone rather than black forehead, yellow and reddish face. But my in-born dark skin is a fact. So there of course is a dilemma there because I know whiteness product to me is useless.

I can't be as white as Sammi on the TV commercial."

c) Ad Knowledgeable Group

6. Vivien's profile:

City of origin: Hong Kong
Occupation: Advertising Account Manager
Advertising knowledge: A lot
Brand loyalty: *SK-II*
Impression on *SK-II*: Famous, very expensive, not so worthy
Skin tone: neutral
Compared to others: neutral
Three physical unattractivenesses: It depends. If people are tired, in bad mood or under pressure, the proverb applies. It doesn't apply for people who are healthy, active and happy.
Applicability of the proverb: I don't really concern about this…as long as I won't become a "dark" person. I am totally OK with my skin tone. Sometimes in summer, tan-look is preferred so as to give people an impression of healthiness.

Vivien's PIA exercise:

Primary Words	**Associative & Most Significant Words**	**Inner Self Symbols**
White	Pure, Dignity, Righteous	Believed
Bright	Yellow, Sunshine, Sunbathing	Cheerful
Impossible	Being a billionaire!!!	Fantasy
Cheerful	Children, Love, Smile	Motivating
Comfortable	Home, Holiday, Family, Being with friends	Secured
Beautiful	Love, Family	Trusting
Cute	Dogs, Children, Smile	Simple
Relax	Holiday, Home, Dining, Eating	Secured
Fake	Office, Colleagues, Life, Human Beings	Weak
Untruthful	Advertising, sales	Exaggerated

Vivien's insight:

"The *SK-II* whitening products use puffery advertising to persuade female users. It is exaggerating. Having said that, however, I still believe in that because it helps to whiten my skin – to make me look cheerful and beautiful. Others then perceive me as a trustful person."

7. CC's profile:

City of origin: Hong Kong
Occupation: Advertising Account Executive
Advertising knowledge: A lot
Brand loyalty: Neutrogena
Impression on *SK-II*: Too expensive and not worthy
Skin tone: Fairly white
Compared to others: Fairly white
Three physical unattractivenesses: Fat, short, skin with big pores
Applicability of the proverb: It does apply to the first impression when you meet somebody. Whey you're white, it makes people feel that you're tidy and neat, though you're not pretty enough. White skin also makes people think that you're kind, pleasant and cheerful. It helps make relationships with others.

CC's PIA exercise:

Primary Words	Associative & Most Significant Words	Inner Self Symbols
White	Smooth, clean, angel and beautiful	Fantasy
Comfortable	Relax, air-conditioning, no worry	Fantasy
Clean	White, neat and tidy	Judging
Cool	Relax, convenient, comfortable	Fantasy
Overwhelming lighting	Fake, man-made	Resistible
Nutrient	Rich beautiful conscious	Judging
Decent	OL, confident	Vulnerable

CC's insight:

"The white and smooth face in the TVC let me related to myself…I'm white but seem not "purify" enough. I'm white and all the people surrounding say I have a good skin…but seem not as good as hers. It makes me feeling dirty. I want to be free from all skin – problems, which I would be proud of and make me feel relax and comfortable. If I feel that my skin is not white, smooth enough, I would think myself is ugly and also the others would do. The skin is very important to me. It can affect my mood and feeling during the whole day. It induces me to keep my good skin. The setting is very comfortable and decent. It represents a class with confident and intelligent. I should be like that!

But when the overwhelming lighting makes the perfect skin, it is very man-made. I hate it. I hate something which is very man-made, like over make-up. It's not true and it's not beautiful. I don't appreciate it.

The image does induce me to do something, of coz one of the solution is whitening mask, to keep my good skin, but the overwhelming lighting reflecting the perfect skin makes a fake impression. The product seems not credible enough. It just oversells it."

d) Non SK-II Myth Believers

8. Szeman's profile:

City of origin: Hong Kong
Occupation: Public Relations Account Executive
Advertising knowledge: A lot
Brand loyalty: Valmont (and my mom is a beautician)
Impression on *SK-II*: Expensive, over-claiming.
Skin tone: Very white
Compared to others: Very white
Three physical unattractivenesses: Fat, short, aging
Applicability of the proverb: Appearance is very important when having job interviews. It may help our first impression in building relationships (work and friendship).

Szeman's PIA exercise:

Primary Words	Associative & Most Significant Words	Inner Self Symbols
White	Plain, nothing, pure	Stabilizing
Pure	Clean, non-bacteria, illness	Controlling
Clean	White, fresh, cleanser	Recharging
Celebrity	Expensive, famous, popular	Controlling
Gray	Ill, bad, sad	Alerting
Exaggerated	Over-claim, false, dramatic	Vulnerable
Colorful	Yellow, energetic, rainbow	Driving

Szeman's insight:

"I am very careful in evaluating the ads. I do not want to buy the products just after reading the ad. I read too many ads from *SK-II*. The ads are too dramatic. I would not believe it easily. I am self-alerted. I am self-controlling when reading the ad. I think that what I am using now is sufficient. In fact, I bought Max Factor lipstick which also promoted by Sammi before. After using it, I felt very dry and it hurt my lip. I feel that I was cheated by the ad. So, I do not trust what Sammi "sells" and the *SK-II* ads anymore."

9. BJ's profile:

City of origin: Hong Kong (but raised in Canada)
Occupation: Full time student (Financial analyst before returning to school)
Advertising knowledge: Little
Brand loyalty: Glycel, Sisley and *SK-II*
Impression on *SK-II*: Too many products
Skin tone: Fairly white
Compared to others: Fairly white
Three physical unattractivenesses: No…attractiveness is from inner beauty
Applicability of the proverb: Inner beauty is the most important and I believe we should feel comfortable of our look that is given by our parents.

BJ's PIA exercise:

Primary Words	Associative & Most Significant Words	Inner Self Symbols
Artificial	Unpleasant, dull, tedious	Boring
Suitable	Appropriate, familiar, accepted	Outstanding
Clear	Fine, definite, plain	Focus
Colorful	Enlighten, bright, match	Happy
Superficial	Pretended, act, feign	Open

BJ's insight:

When I was a teenager, I admired people with tanned skin and it looked so healthy. I was not happy with my fair skin as I think I was as white as "pig". There was one time, I tried to put on the darkest suntan oil and went on sunshine bathing for the entire afternoon and I did only turn my skin to red, then few days later, it turned back to normal. I felt very boring by going back and forth to the beach and I decided to give up. However, when I grow up, fair skin is a sign of delicate and pure look. People is dreaming to have light skin and spend $$$ on whitening skin-care product. Oh!! Thanks so much I did not burn my skin when I was young.

10. Qing's profile:

City of origin: Shanghai
Occupation: Part-time student (Journalist before coming to the US with her husband)
Advertising knowledge: Little
Brand loyalty: Maybeline, Aupress
Impression on *SK-II*: Too expensive, unnecessary
Skin tone: Neutral
Compared to others: Neutral
Three physical unattractivenesses: Small eyes, fat and rude manner
Applicability of the proverb: No…I don't agree this proverb, as it looks unhealthy if someone has too white skin. I don't pursue white skin on purpose in my life.

Qing's PIA exercise:

Primary Words	Associative & Most Significant Words	Inner Self Symbols
Clean	Distilled water, sky, naive	Gentle
Matched	Positioning, love, clothes	Balancing
Consistent	Question, answer, talk + action	Inconsistent
Complicated	Numbers, production, philosophy, instruction	Casual
Fashionable	Fashion, idea, language, style	Unsatisfying
Energetic	Undergrad. Students, football, lifestyle, transportation	Satisfying
Natural	National park, lifestyle, village, expression	Contrasting
Successful	Money, fortune, power, family, friendship, self-actualization	Natural

Qing's insight:

"The process of the growth of a girl, actually, is a process of finding ways to balance herself. You couldn't believe how I was like 10 years ago…I was the type of girl who wanted to travel alone with my backpack. I was always criticized by the leaders of the Chinese government. At that time, I really wanted to escape to big cities. Because city girls are associated with striving for freedom, dream and love from the song, "Olive Tree."

My life became stable after working for few years and my ability was recognized. My satisfying inner self was achieved by climbing the career path. I understood that the only way to achieve success was by working hard. I tried to maintain my image as a successful office lady (when I was still a single person).

But I finally realized that marriage is the "second" life of women…after getting married. It changed the way of my thinking…from a girl to a woman. I cannot do what I want right away because I need to be responsible for my beloved one.

"Balance is beauty." I feel satisfied with my balancing self. My unsatisfying inner self reveals that I lose balanced a bit because I am now a F2 visa holder. That means I need to rely on someone. But I am adjusting it to keep myself balanced. The way that I am achieving for balanced life is far more important than making a lot of money."

Vis Comm

Immmersive 360-Degree Panoramic Video Environments: Research on "User-Directed News" Applications

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1. Introduction

Cultural critics note that electronic media's "new expressive technology" marks a democratization of discourse and a revival of rhetorical practice. "The oral world returns in hyperliterate form," Lanham argues.[1] And, as Ong points out, for an oral culture, "learning and knowing means achieving close, empathetic communal identification with the known."[2] For the early Greeks, to listen to Homer or other oral performers was an empathetic and participatory act, allowing the audience members to shape the story until they were satisfied. This is an entirely different experience from the objectively distanced, passive reaction one has today from reading text or watching 2-D video. In the oral world, to use Ong's phrase, one becomes immersed in the story, "encased in the communal reaction, the communal 'soul.'"

This freedom from the constraints of linear textual discourse and video presentation helps explain the global hunger for virtual environments. But it is as if we have emerged from a flat black-and-white world into the 3-D spaces of the Internet without a map and no rules or recognizable traffic signals. "While art history, geography, anthropology, sociology, and other disciplines have come up with many approaches to analyze spaces as a static, objectively existing structure, we do not have the same wealth of concepts to help us think about the poetics of navigation through (computer) space," Manovich laments.[3]

The realism of new technology has opened up a set of aesthetic possibilities, as the movie and digital game industries are eagerly – and profitably – demonstrating. But the ability to use 3-D computer graphics to construct virtual spaces, based on existing social spaces, also has great promise for journalism. The non-fiction storyteller can observe and digitally record actual physical spaces, such as neighborhoods within cities and their inhabitants, preserve these spaces accurately and "without succumbing to illusionism; the virtual representation encodes the city's genetic code, its deep structure rather than its surface."[4] The viewer can then float through this virtual world and engage actively in the story by controlling the narrative flow.

Computer graphic modeling systems and advanced graphic interfaces, such as the head-mounted display (HMD), create a sense of presence that is more immediate and realistic than traditional media. Technology now allows a journalist to craft and depict virtual social environments for the viewer to enter and experience first-hand, to create an immersive presence that permits engagement with the environment. The key role of the journalist becomes that of creating an accurate and comprehensive visual experience, a sense of "realism" that meets the user's desire for immediacy, and a natural setting that invites exploration.

A well-told text or video story can also allow the reader or viewer to have a sense of "being there." Well-designed graphics in print or television enhance that experience. But these are passive acts. Consciousness always hovers above the external, objectified code or image, threatening to intervene at the slightest break in concentration or sensory distraction. As readers and 2-D viewers, we skate across this perspective, which is essentially arbitrary, since it is the creation of an external writer/director/videographer and "pushed" at the audience according to long-established codes of interpretation, such as text or voice-over, image choice and cropping, juxtaposition of images to enhance meaning, genre of story type and color.[5]

The ability to create virtual reality (VR) represents a fundamental departure from linear text code and ritualized video concepts. In particular, recent advances in Panoramic Video (PV) camera systems have produced new methods for the creation of virtual environments.[6] With these systems, users can capture, play back and observe pictorially accurate 360-degree video scenes of "real world" environments. When delivered via an immersive HMD, an experience of presence within captured scenarios can be available to a news audience seeking realism and immediacy.

Virtual reality systems surround the viewer with a computer-generated image. As Jay David Bolter and Richard Grusin note, "virtual reality should come as close as possible to our daily visual experience. Its graphic space should be continuous and full of objects and should fill the viewer's field of vision without rupture."[7] The space created by the journalist allows a freedom of movement that becomes the defining quality of new media: *user control of the point of view.* This sense of control promotes the creation of a virtual self, a sense of being there and doing things at a level that engages the unconscious – the non-verbal, graphics-dominated realm of understanding that is lauded by postmodernists, empirically mapped by cognitive psychologists and increasingly defined through semiotics and Communications theory.

"What makes interactive graphics unique is that the shifts (in perspective) can now take place at the viewer's will," Bolter and Grusin point out.[8] Such a "pull" technology is contrasted against traditional video in which the view is controlled at the source and is identical for all observers. Along with other computer graphic modeling methods, PV overcomes the passive and structured limitations of how images are presented and perceived. The recent convergence of camera, processing and display technologies makes it possible for a user to have a choice in viewing direction and focus.

This freedom has metaphorical significance because it allows situated viewing and the ability to transport oneself mentally – and emotionally and even physically, by means of haptics – into another environment. Viewer involvement and connectedness, for example, takes a quantum leap over the experience provided by talk shows, in which the viewer can participate via e-mail or by phoning in, or reality television, in which the camera placement offers viewer involvement in every moment of the show participants' lives. Broadcast talk shows and realistic television still leave the viewer at the mercy of each medium's ability to "both show and conceal, reflect and distort the realities which they represent."[9] By contrast, a validly constructed (i.e. journalistically accurate and comprehensive) virtual environment gives the viewer the ability to move through that space in a way that defines a virtual self apart from the journalist's point of view. As Bolter and Grusin note, this freedom can serve a radical cultural purpose: "to enable us to occupy the position, and therefore the point of view, of people … different from ourselves. To occupy multiple points of view [serially if not simultaneously] becomes a new positive good and perhaps the major freedom that our culture can offer."[10] This point of view identification allows the viewer to enter the other person's world and relate to others in an empathetic way. VR becomes a "path to empathy" or a "visual construction of empathy."[11] This gives the viewer a new way of knowing reality: "immediate, embodied, emotional and culturally determined." VR allows the freedom to become someone else, the highest degree of empathetic living and experience. This "new kind of camera" means that the viewer can assume the inquirer task of the journalist and explore a given social environment at will.

This does not make the journalist an obsolete appendage. Digital technology preserves several traditional roles of the newsperson, in some cases enhancing them, and adds new responsibilities. First, the journalist continues to perform the job of forward scout, a social explorer who seeks out settings and circumstances that the average person might not be aware of or, for various reasons – danger, inconvenience, distance, logistics – might not wish to enter. Second, the journalist is still a producer, assembling the resources – vehicles, equipment, personnel, press passes and permissions, background information, training, food and water, communications, etc. – necessary to cover a story, to do "the shoot." Third, the digital journalist acts as an information architect, placing the story in a context and social setting that defines the physical space, providing a structure in which the viewer can experience VR. Within this space, the image changes in time as the story progresses. Fourth, the writer or broadcaster sets up or anchors stories through leads, introductions and voice-overs.

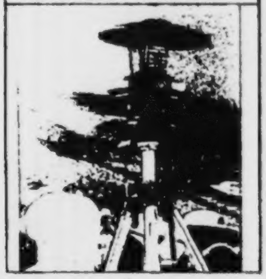
The VR environment opens the way for the journalist to play a more important anchor role, to become the "immersant," allowing the "immersed" audience to witness his or her journey through a virtual world. The viewer can assume the point of view of the journalist, and that "immersant" then becomes "a kind of ship captain, taking the audience along on a journey; like a ship captain, she occupies a visible and symbolically marked position," Manovich says.[12] The journalist can also give meaning or context to the VR images, much as the text of a caption will anchor the meaning of a photograph.[13] In digital multimedia journalism, the journalist assumes an enhanced role of researcher/librarian by assembling background information, related texts, stories, outside links, documents, maps, graphics, video sidebars and a potentially limitless array of contextual material for the viewer at any time he or she decides to freeze the PV environment in time and seek supplemental information. Both the ship captain role and how the PV perspective interacts with surrounding contextual information will be subjects of further research by our User-Directed News initiative.

A large gap now exists between the theoretical benefits of VR news environments and their actual usability. This technology has only entered the preliminary phase. Ultimately, the use of PV content in presenting news will depend on how viewers can best observe, interact with, enjoy and benefit from dynamic PV scenarios. At this point, PV has limitations regarding functional interactivity. Whereas users operating with a computer-graphics VE scenario are usually capable of both 6DF navigation and interaction with rendered objects, PV immersion allows mainly for observation of the scene from the fixed location of the camera with varying degrees of orientation control (i.e. pitch, roll and yaw). In spite of this limitation, the goals of certain application areas, including news presentation, may well be matched to the assets available with this type of PV image capture and delivery system. It is now capable of meeting the high requirements for presenting real locations inhabited by real people. Moreover, alternative methods to support "pseudo-interaction" are possible by augmenting panoramic imagery with video overlays and computer-graphics objects. This paper will briefly present the technical details of our PV system, describe the scenarios we have captured thus far and highlight our research program.

2. Brief system overview and technical description

Panoramic image acquisition is based on mosaic approaches developed in the context of still imagery. Mosaics are created from multiple overlapping sub-images pieced together to form a high resolution, panoramic, wide field-of-view image. Viewers often dynamically select subsets of the complete panorama for viewing. Several panoramic video systems use single camera images,[14] however, the resolution limits of a single image sensor reduce the quality of the imagery presented to a user. While still image mosaics and panoramas are common, we produce high-resolution panoramic video by employing an array of five video cameras viewing the scene over a combined 360-degrees of horizontal arc. The cameras are arrayed to look at a five-facet pyramid mirror. The images from neighboring cameras overlap slightly to facilitate their merger. The camera controllers are each accessible through a serial port so that a host computer can save and restore camera settings as needed. The complete camera system (Figure 1) is available from FullView, Inc.[15]

Figure 1. FullView Panoramic Camera



The five camera video streams feed into a digital recording and playback system that we designed and constructed for maintaining precise frame synchronization. All recording and playback is performed at full video (30Hz) frame rates. The five live or recorded video streams are digitized and processed in real time by a computer system. The camera lens distortions and colorimetric variations are corrected by the software application and a complete panoramic image is constructed in memory. With five cameras, this image has over 3000x480 pixels. From the complete image, one or more scaled sub-images are extracted for real-time display in one or more frame buffers and display channels. Figure 2 shows an example of the screen output with a full 360° still image extracted from the video.

The camera system was designed for viewing the images on a desktop monitor. With a software modification provided by FullView Inc., we were able to create an immersive viewing interface with a SONY Glasstron head-mounted display (HMD). A single window with a resolution of 800x600 is output to the HMD worn by a user. A real-time (inertial-magnetic) orientation tracker[16] is fixed to the HMD to sense the user's head orientation. The orientation is reported to the viewing application through an IP socket, and the output display window is positioned (to mimic pan and tilt) within the full panoramic image in response to the user's head orientation. View control by head motion is a major contributor to the sense of immersion experienced by the user. It provides the natural viewing control we are accustomed to without any intervening devices or translations.

Figure 2. Still 360-degree PV image extracted from video footage taken at the Los Angeles Coliseum.

3. Exploratory field testing and user testing

The capture, production and delivery of PV scenarios present unique challenges. Application development decisions require informed consideration of pragmatic issues involving the assets/limitations that exist with PV scenarios, the requirements of the application and how these two factors relate to user capabilities and preferences. Based on our initial field-testing experience, we outlined a series of guidelines and recommendations for the creation of PV scenarios that appeared in Rizzo et al.[17] The areas covered in that paper dealt with pragmatic production issues, determination of suitable PV content, display and user interaction considerations, audio/computer graphic/PV integration issues and hardware options for maximizing accessibility. These recommendations were based on our experience in PV scenario production from a producer/developer standpoint and from user feedback provided by approximately 400-500 individuals at the time. Since then, we have continued to collect user feedback and have used this data to inform the design process in our evolving PV application research and development program.

Field-trials with the PV camera and user testing with acquired content have been conducted across a range of scenarios to explore feasibility issues for using this system with a variety of user applications. The following test scenarios were captured in order to assess the PV system across a range of lighting, external activity, camera movement and conceptual conditions. Informal evaluation of users' responses to these scenarios has been conducted with controlled experiments currently underway for some of the applications. Our PV scenarios have included:

1. An outdoor mall with the camera in a static position in daytime lighting with close background structures and moderate human foot traffic, both close-up and at a distance.
2. An outdoor ocean pier with the camera in a static position with both long shots of activity on a beach and close-up activity of human foot traffic and amusement park structures on the pier.
3. The interior of an outside facing glass elevator with the camera in a static position and the elevator smoothly rising 15 floors from a low light position (e.g., tree-shielded street level) to more intense lighting as the elevator ascended above the tree line.
4. Traveling on a canyon road with the camera mounted in the bed of a pickup truck for 30 minutes at speeds ranging from 0-40 mph under all daylight ranges of lighting (low shaded light to intense direct sun).
5. Same as #4, except at night on a busy well-lit street (Sunset Boulevard in Los Angeles), and on a freeway traveling at speeds from 0-60 mph.
6. A USC football game within the Los Angeles Coliseum from both static and moving positions in daytime lighting, with extreme close-ups of moving people and massive crowd scenes (40,000+ people).

7. An indoor rock concert in a theatre (*Duran Duran*) from a static position under a variety of extreme lighting conditions in the midst of an active crowd, slightly above average head level.
8. Two artistic projects were done in collaboration with the UCLA Digital Media Arts Department and the USC School of Fine Arts. The UCLA project involved the capture of dancers performing around the 360-degree field of view of the camera. Significant post-production work took place to display the panoramic capture within an immersive theatre that incorporated live dancers in a mixed reality installation. The USC project involved building a circular fish tank around the camera with live tropical fish swimming within and a coral reef photo serving as background on the outermost tank wall. The users wore an HMD that helped to create the illusion of being immersed within the swimming fish environment for one minute. Following this sequence, the coral reef photo background was manually removed to reveal the activity in the laboratory where the capture occurred creating a dramatic "breaking of the illusion" effect. This application also served as an early test for a future project in which the panoramic camera will be placed within a sealed Plexiglass tube and lowered into a very large commercial aquarium exhibit.
9. Thirteen scenarios were created in an indoor office space for an "anger management in the workplace" application. In these scenarios, actors portrayed agitated and insulting co-workers who addressed the camera (and vis a vis, the clinical user wearing the HMD) with provocative and hostile verbal messages (Figure 3). The scenarios were designed to provide role playing environments for patients undergoing psychotherapy for issues relating to anger management in the workplace, or as it is commonly referred to as "Desk Rage."[18] The patients wearing the HMD in these scenarios have the opportunity to practice appropriate responses to the characters and employ therapeutic strategies for reducing rage responses. Traditional methods of therapy in this area have mainly relied on guided imagery or role-playing with the therapist. It was hypothesized that PV content could serve to create immersive simulations that patients will find more realistic and engaging, and research is currently underway to assess this with clinical users at The VRMH center in San Diego, CA (See: http://www.vrphobia.com/about.htm).
10. A Virtual "Mock-Party" with the camera in a static position in the center of an indoor home environment in the midst of an active party with approximately 30 participants (Figure 4). This "scripted" scenario was shot while systematically directing and controlling the gradual introduction of participants into the scene and orchestrating their proximity and "pseudo-interaction" with the camera. The scenario was created for a therapeutic application designed to conduct graded exposure therapy[19] with social phobics. We have also experimented with pasting "blue screen" capture of actors (using a single video camera in the lab) into the panoramic scenes. The actors address the camera with a spectrum of socially challenging questions that provide the clinical user with opportunities to practice social verbal engagement in a psychologically safe environment. The separate capture and pasting of characters will allow the therapist to introduce a progressively more challenging level of social stress to the patient when deemed appropriate based on therapist monitoring of patient self-report and physiological responses. User testing on this project with clinical populations is anticipated to begin in June, 2003.

Figure 3. "Desk Rage" – PV Therapy for Anger Management in the Workplace

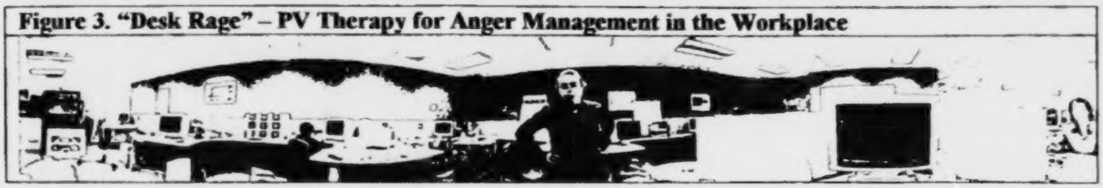


Figure 4. PV "Mock-Party" for Social Phobia Exposure Therapy

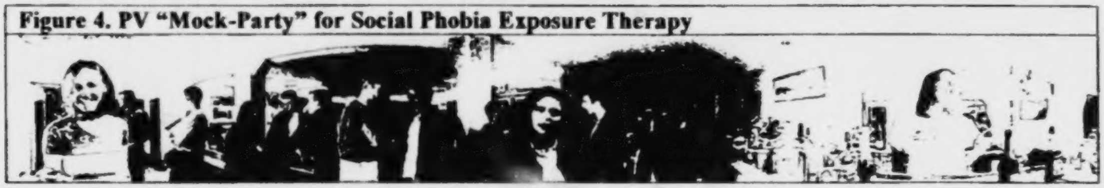
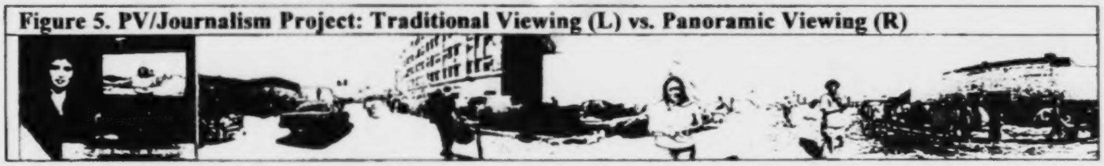


Figure 5. PV/Journalism Project: Traditional Viewing (L) vs. Panoramic Viewing (R)



4. User Directed News research program

The User Directed News project is based on the idea that as journalism moves into the 21st Century, new forms of information technology (IT) stand to revolutionize methods for acquiring, packaging, organizing and delivering newsworthy information content. With these advancements in IT will come both opportunities and challenges for creating systems that humans will find to be usable, useful and preferred options for interacting with newsworthy information content. However, a number of pragmatic and user-centered questions need to be addressed scientifically before a determination of the value of this system can be made.

Research Design Summary - The User-Directed News project at IMSC and the Annenberg School seeks to address these production problems and other limitations of PV technology. The research is ongoing and cumulative, based on our previous technical experience, lessons learned in the field and through usability testing. Equipment problems are being worked on before our next field project, including easily assembled modular units and mobile power sources, for example. Future production will also include more extensive and refined "shells" of information for the viewer to interact with, as well as the integration of advanced database retrieval methods. Our approach is multidisciplinary, involving journalism, cognitive psychology, Communications theory and engineering.

As our initial research phase into news applications, on Sunday, January 12, 2003, we loaded our Panoramic Camera and supporting computers and other equipment into a panel van and took it to a block of downtown Los Angeles between 4th and 5th streets and Towne Avenue, the center of the city's large homeless population. We had a crew of two principal investigators (Pryor and Rizzo), two co-investigators with advanced technical and graphics skills (Gardner and Ghahremani), two journalism graduate students (Michael Fanous and Naomie Worrell), who have broadcast experience, and three production assistants.

We chose this physical space and social environment for several reasons. It was a scene of harsh human deprivation, a street lined on both side with tents and temporary shelters, mainly cardboard and blankets, which were arrayed along both sidewalks. The streets were bordered with shuttered warehouses and parking lots, with one active non-governmental mission in a hotel-like building at the western end of the block. The view was one of clutter, dirt and grime. That Sunday was a hot, sun-driven day, but it is a climate that can – and did – change in hours to cold and rain. The stark conditions of this homeless population, in itself, is a compelling story, one that requires understanding, analysis and empathy to correctly comprehend. Beyond the physical and social scene, the story has powerful socio-economic overtones as the city of Los Angeles seeks to "improve" downtown and expand its redevelopment program into parts of the Central Core occupied by homeless people for many decades, if not since the city was founded in the 18th Century. The city's economic plan calls for developers to take control of an expanding Central Business District and convert the land uses from warehouses and light manufacturing (mainly garment lofts) to residential apartments, retail, commercial and entertainment uses. To accomplish this requires moving the homeless population, the legal justification being the trespassing on sidewalks, loitering, public health "threats" and crime (drugs, prostitution and other illegal commerce). This is a politically, economically and socially contentious issue of great complexity and emotion, in other words, an important news story. Parts of this story have been covered by the *Los Angeles Times* and other local news outlets, with notable variations in thoroughness, accuracy and cultural sensitivity. (One person familiar with the Towne Avenue scene said that TV film crews would drive up the street in pickup trucks, shooting video from the truck bed without stopping or asking permission. One film crew, he said, had come through a few days before we did our video work with a production assistant in the back of the truck armed with a water squirt gun "to rile people up as they drove by.")

Two of our Annenberg School of Journalism students, Fanous and Worrell, had done major projects focused on the plight of LA's homeless population. Their expertise and willingness to film the scene on Towne with our 360-degree camera strongly influenced our selection of this location. But the scene had another element that will be an important part of our ongoing investigation of User-Directed News, the ability of PV technology to capture symbolism. The Towne Avenue block is a highly symbolic multicultural, multiracial environment that has mythical overtones, both laudable, for the emotions of empathy that Skid Row can evoke, and morally deplorable for the negative emotions it can trigger – insensitivity, bigotry and violence with tinges of "ethnic cleansing." Only two weeks after we shot the scene on Towne, L.A. police officers descended on the street, accompanied by city trash trucks, and confiscated and removed all of the tents and temporary shelters and dispersed the street dwellers on threat of jail for violating an ordinance against sleeping or sitting on sidewalks. (Copies of the ordinance were posted on warehouse walls along the street.) Clearly, this was a scene in which iconic symbols and myths, both good and bad, played a strong and visible role. Without going into the theory of signs in this paper, we were aware of the symbolic elements of the scene, of the semiotic possibilities embraced by this location and the importance this would play in whatever script we wrote or images we captured that day.

We parked our van in an alley next to the mission at the corner of 5th and Towne and placed our camera in the middle of the street. Ghahremani and Gardner remained in the van to run the computers, Worrell took up station in front of one of the camera's five lenses to deliver her script and Fanous sat under the camera, out of its field of vision, to hold cue cards for Worrell. Pryor and Rizzo talked with the street's residents to explain what the filming project was about and to win their support and agreement to do the filming. It became evident from this interaction, if brief, that this group of people had established a cohesive community with a strong identification and purpose of self-protection, as well as good internal communication. The message spread up and down the street that we were from nearby USC and were working on a research project. Not everyone agreed that we should tape but majority ruled, and we were allowed to proceed. The actual taping, involving one aborted start and two run-throughs, took about 45 minutes.

The videotapes were later edited and the five video images combined by Gharhremani and Rizzo for display on a PC console and for use in the head-mounted device. Two perspectives resulted, one a traditional 2-D perspective using one camera, which focused on Worrell as she delivered her narrative and showed the scene behind her; the other was a 360-degree panorama, each of the five images being joined seamlessly to produce a realistic duplication of the scene from the fixed location of the camera. Worrell became only one element within the computer space.

Methodology - The current study will compare the memory performances of two groups of 30 undergraduate research subjects, aged 20-40, following the presentation of the mini-news documentary in two different viewing formats. Condition 1 will have users view the two-minute news story in a "traditional" single frame flatscreen viewing format. This group of users will have access to the one field of view containing the reporter's delivery of the story, as is common practice in a standard on-the-scene reporting approach. Condition 2 users will have access to view the complete 360-degree arc of the environment from where the news story was reported. Users in this condition will view the news story from within a head-mounted display and have free choice to observe the PV scene from any perspective within the 360-degree arc. Condition 2 users will also hear the *exact same verbal delivery* from the reporter as presented in Condition 1.

Following exposure to the 2-minute story, users in both groups will be tested on multiple measures of memory (recall and recognition) for the information presented in the story and on user preference for use of the system. Memory for the content of the news story will also be tested again one week later. Users in both conditions will be compared on preference for viewing format and on Presence ratings using the Witmer and Singer Presence Questionnaire.[20] As well, head tracking data from users in Condition 2 will be quantified to produce a metric of exploratory behavior within the 360 degree PV scene. These metrics will examine the total distance traversed within the 360-degree arc and the amount of time that users spend focusing on the reporter compared with total "off-reporter" exploration.

This design will allow for the comparison of groups on immediate acquisition/retention of content and on long-term recall/recognition retrieval. We hypothesize that the sense of "being there" or "presence" will be enhanced in Group 2 by way of using an immersive HMD, and that this added engagement will increase long term recall by providing better contextual retrieval cues that leverage episodic memory processes. While the groups may not differ on measures of immediate memory, due to competing distraction effects nullifying immersion based gains in the HMD condition, we predict that when subjects are tested one week later, the contextual, episodic memory and presence effects will operate to produce much better recall/recognition retrieval.

Early results of this first phase of research will be available in July. Some of the basic questions that this methodology is designed to investigate include:

- Will users generally prefer to have news delivered in the 360-degree HMD format?
- Does immersion and self-selection compel the user to prefer this method of being "involved" in the story?
- Will reporters be able to adapt to this more "free form" method of reporting and what challenges will this produce for reporters in delivering "stories" to users who may not chose to follow the information flow in a traditional fixed "linear" manner?
- Will choice of viewing interfere with the acquisition of the logical story line in a news report?
- Will users be able to recall key points of the reported event in a meaningful manner?
- Will long term memory be enhanced in the immersive HMD condition?
- What types of news events would this system be best suited for in terms of user preference and information processing issues and what are the key elements of newsworthy events that might predict successful outcomes for use of the system?
- Will users naturally explore the 360 environment and choose to use this option?

Future research will deal with applications of increasingly advanced PV and multimedia technology to news scenarios. The goal will be to create virtual news spaces that will allow the viewer to "move in, around, and through information," to use Bolter's description. We will eventually have an "interfaceless" interface "in which there will be no recognizable electronic tools – no buttons, windows, scroll bars or even icons as such. Instead the user will move through the space, interacting with the objects 'naturally,' as she does in the physical world."[21]

We will develop another news scenario in fall 2003 and conduct usability tests with a larger population that will be more representative of the general population. The content "shells" surrounding the virtual space will also be complete and helpful to the viewer. In addition to seeking to answer the questions listed above, we will record and analyze how the viewer interacts between the virtual and archival worlds and the preferred paths of navigation, points of view and perspectives. We will also measure degrees of connectedness or empathy.

5. Conclusion

The development and adaptation of PV technology to news scenarios should be a matter of some urgency to traditional publishers and broadcasters who, many readership surveys show, are in danger of losing a substantial segment of their younger audience to the Internet and alternative sources of entertainment, especially digital games and music. The key to survival will be their ability to connect with the Under 35 audience and the vital teen market. This age group "gets" VR. Surging games sales indicate a cultural hunger for this perspective within computer space. Whether the young viewers are to be enticed into non-fiction scenarios will depend on how actively journalists adopt advanced technology such as PV systems. Media survival is not all that is at stake. A worldwide generation of future citizens may be lost to PV scenarios that have little relevance to social and political skills or may even be antithetical to them. If that comes to pass, Plato will have been proved right – the cultural swing away from linear literacy and into orality and rhetoric allowed the poets to trivialize education and destroy the state.

Notes

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Convergence and Writing Instruction: Interviews with Journalism Faculty Members about Curriculum Decisions

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Convergence and Writing Instruction: Interviews with Journalism Faculty Members about Curriculum Decisions

Abstract

College journalism faculty members are dealing with whether or not to incorporate convergence into the curriculum. The researchers interviewed instructors from university journalism programs to determine how they are dealing with convergence in their media writing classes and the basis of their curriculum decisions. The instructors discussed the changes they have made in writing instruction in the last three to five years; assignments they have included in their curricula that have required students to write for the Web or broadcast; how having students write for media other than newspapers and magazines has affected their ability to write for print; and how teachers have prepared to teach converged journalism. The teachers represented two main perspectives: the adopters and the non-adopters. Factors that affected curriculum decisions included assessment of students' writing ability, perceptions of faculty of the job market demands for students, professional training of faculty members, and funding.

Convergence and Writing Instruction: Interviews with Journalism Faculty Members about Curriculum Decisions

Thomas Kunkel, dean of the Phillip Merill College of Journalism at the University of Maryland, said that journalism "is part skill, part craft and part art ... However we elect to do it, we are obligated to teach our students certain skills" (Kunkel, 4). Writing instructors are obligated to teach the fundamentals of media writing.

Today, more and more journalism and communications teachers are coming to terms with the realities of a converged media world. The June 2, 2003, ruling of the Federal Communications Commission to ease the restrictions on media ownership certainly added to the reality of convergence. With the new FCC ruling, more media operations may become like Media General's Tampa operation with the newspaper (The Tampa Tribune), a network television station (the NBC affiliate), and a Web site (tampabay.org) working as a team rather than competitors. A recent study at the University of South Florida found that 78 percent of respondents in a survey of professionals agreed that "journalism majors should learn multiple sets of skills such as writing, editing, TV production, digital photography, news design, and Web publishing" (Huang *et al.*, 2002, 10)

Journalism educators will have to respond to the growing possibility of the students in their journalism programs having internships and jobs that will be in multi-media business operations. Journalism teachers are re-thinking the curriculum, with an emerging pedagogical question is: How should instructors teach basic or introductory writing classes given the realities in a converged media world?

The purpose of this study was to talk with college journalism teachers and find out if convergence is changing what they teach. This qualitative study was based on interviews (in person, by phone and by e-mail) with journalism educators and was designed to explore how and if convergence is incorporated into the journalism writing curriculum.

The researchers asked college and university journalism teachers four open-ended questions/prompts. Interviews were conducted by telephone, e-mail and in person.

The questions asked were:

(1) What changes have you made in teaching media writing in the last 3-5 years to address convergence and new media?

(2) Explain a writing assignment that you include in a media writing class that requires the students to write for broadcast or the Web.

(3) How do you think having students write for other media (i.e., broadcast and the Web) has affected their ability to write for print?

(4) How have faculty members in your program prepared to teach convergence (i.e., attending workshops to learn skills, having release time to develop curriculum)?

Literature review

All accredited journalism and communications programs in journalism at the college and university levels regularly review their goals, curriculum and teaching as part of the ASJMC accrediting process. But self-review has taken on a more critical assessment in the last several years due to several key issues.

An ongoing issue in the discussion of "what should journalism education accomplish" is whether or not formal journalism training as a college or university degree program is even necessary – or desirable – for those who want to go into media careers. That debate has been renewed in journalism and communications schools across the country when Columbia

University President Lee Bollinger refused to hire a new J-school dean at the university's graduate program until a new mission statement had been constructed that would take Columbia into the 21st Century (Janeway, 2002). This set off a nationwide debate on the purposes of today's journalism schools, professional programs that are often housed in research universities.

One side sees journalism school as unnecessary – and that all aspiring journalists need to know about journalism either comes from reading plenty of history and literature or from getting experience in the real world of the media. Students who are interested in working for the media should major in a subject area – such as political science or environmental studies – that could be the foundation of beat reporting. They can learn journalism skills on the job (Spiker, 2003; Hall 2002).

The other side says that journalism schools provide students with organized instruction and practice in reporting and writing – enabling students to learn and discuss key issues – from media ethics to page design – that are skills necessary for survival in the real world of the media (Cunningham, 2003; Thomas, 2002).

Another factor causing journalism programs to rethink their curriculum and their approach to teaching is the ASJMC requirement that will require an accredited program to have assessment standards in place to measure student success. Most programs have judged student achievement based on GPA, graduation rate, and student placement after graduation. Having to develop assessment standards is forcing journalism educators to consider course goals and outcome standards for students. Helen L. Chen (2003) discussed the use of e-portfolios as a means of both requiring and enabling students to document their learning experiences and media competency.

But the issue most driving curriculum review – and possibly curriculum revision – is convergence, the merging of news operations (newspapers, television stations, Web sites, radio stations, etc.) that requires employees to have the ability to work across platforms. In such a converged media operation, the editors and news directors share their budgets, and reporters for one medium may be asked to repurpose a story for another platform (Moses, June 30, 2003).

Both media professionals and college and university journalism faculty are divided in how to respond to convergence.

Some believe that convergence is an ever-growing reality in the newsroom, requiring reporters to have multimedia skills – skills that go beyond the journalism fundamentals of reporting, writing and editing. Reporters should be able to collect sound bites and write copy for more than one platform. Others believe convergence is making only minimal changes in the habits and routines of media practitioners. Even in a converged news operation, very few reporters actually are involved in preparing stories for more than their particular medium

Those who consider convergence as the new business model for media operations see journalism employees as being a jack of all trades. But many media professionals and journalism educators -- even those who may see convergence as a new dynamic for the media workplace – think that training students to be multimedia reporters isn't desirable.

Northwestern journalism professor Rich Gordon found little evidence of real multi-media journalism in highly converged operations in Orlando and Tampa, Florida. "Print reporters now have to go on air to answer questions about their stories," but that generally is the extent of convergence, Gordon said (South *et al.*, 2002, 11).

But even if individual employees do not need cross-platform skills, media employees need at least an awareness of other media, as those media may be business partners. And even media organizations that consider themselves traditional newspaper or television operations typically will have a Web site (Bulla, 2002).

The Winter 2003 issue of *Journalism & Mass Communication Educator* focused on the topic: "Learning Reconsidered: Education in the Digital Age." The articles covered a range of issues related to incorporating convergence into college journalism programs.

Everette E. Dennis, John Pavlik, Helen L. Chen each discussed the positive potential of rethinking the journalism curriculum to respond to the impact of new technology. Dennis encouraged communications faculty members not to work in isolation to revise the curriculum but to engage "likeminded colleagues in several fields as well as with the business/industry/professional community" (p. 294) in the discussion of how convergence should be taught. Pavlik criticized journalism educators for not moving, as society at large has, to embrace and utilize technology. "Journalism and media education are at a crossroads. Society has changed dramatically in recent years, but how we teach journalism and media studies has changed relatively little" (p. 315). He challenges journalism educators to design a curriculum for the "digital age" (p. 316). Chen discussed how e-portfolios can help students demonstrate their skills and their learning experiences in an exciting way.

The J&MC Educator issue also contained cautions about the impact of new technology on journalism curriculum and the journalism faculty members. Philip Meyer cautioned that the business model that embraces new technology "do not automatically take the public interest into account" (p. 297). He encouraged journalism faculty to remember that a goal of college journalism programs is to consider the public interest in educating future media employees and that involves more than teaching multimedia skills.

Incorporating convergence into the curriculum also was found to be a stress factor for faculty members (Voakes, et. al.; Ogan and Chung). The researchers advised that successful incorporation of technology into the curriculum may require training of faculty, good technology support, adequate hardware and software, and release time for curriculum development and training.

The research and essays of the issue would indicate that convergence has reached a critical mass of adoption in journalism education – even with the problems it may present for faculty and programs. With the FCC ruling on media ownership, with the impact of the Internet on people's news gathering approaches, and with many media organizations operating more than one media outlet in a community, the reality exists that journalism students may have an internship or a job with a converged operation. And journalism educators wonder if their students will be competitive for those positions.

Everrett Rogers' study of the diffusion of innovation – be it weed spray in Iowa or Internet use – found a pattern in how people responded to a new innovation. He categorized individuals involved in the potential innovation as innovators, early adopters, early and late majority and laggards. When the majority of the population has adopted the innovation, a "critical mass" has been reached, which often is the catalyst to encourage laggards to adopt the innovation. But Rogers' research also found that not all innovations had positive results, so that those who may have resisted making the change were, in some cases, better in the long run than those who embraced the change (Rogers, 1995).

The study of adoption of innovation also reveals that adoption of a new product or concept is not simply the case of making a decision and then making the change. A range of factors can prevent or slow the adoption process, even when an individual or group may wish to change (Rogers, 1995).

Several barriers to the implementation of convergence in a journalism curriculum, including resistance to change, lack of resources to train faculty members, and the fact that many media companies simply do not have the necessary technology yet to put together full-fledged converged operations (Fitzgerald, 30). Another issue is the fundamental reality that journalism schools tend to put what Ron Rosenbaum calls "straight reporting" as it is done in daily newspapers at the top of their ideological ladders. He says J-schools need to make the education of their students "as much about writing as it is about reporting" (Rosenbaum, 2002). The very existence of college journalism programs that value writing instruction is where this study begins, for this paper will discuss how media writing instructors see today's curriculum as "a growing number of journalism schools are teaching students how to present news in more than one medium" (South *et al.*, 10).

Methodology

Faculty of nine journalism programs participated in this study. In making the selection of programs, the researchers chose some schools to help answer:

- What factors caused some programs to be the innovators?
- Would programs with a "historical reputation" in journalism education be more likely to make a change to continue to be considered a leader or might be less likely to change a proven tradition of excellence?

The schools were selected to represent a geographic range but were not selected as either a representative or random sample of journalism schools. The programs are: Ball State University, Indiana University – Bloomington, Kent State, Texas A&M, University of Kansas, University of Missouri, University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill, University of Oregon and University of Southern California.

The interviews were conducted by phone, e-mail and in person. In some cases, more than one person in the program was interviewed, if one instructor suggested talking with another instructor in the program. The researchers targeted individuals who were teaching journalistic writing courses, and included faculty members, adjunct faculty and doctoral students.

The researchers told those interviewed that their names and institutions would be used in reporting the information they shared. All those interviewed agreed to that condition.

Two outlooks on converged writing instruction

What emerged from these interviews are two main outlooks toward journalistic writing instruction and convergence.

One group are the convergence converts (innovators and adopters) who have actively incorporated convergence into their teaching. Those were the instructors teaching at Ball State University, Indiana University, Kent State University, Texas A&M, the University of Kansas, the University of Oregon and the University of Southern California.

The other group are the non-adopters. These instructors include those who have made a decision not to change their teaching to include convergence to those who would include convergence if not for extenuating factors such as reaching agreement on curriculum change with other departmental members, funding, etc. Those were instructors teaching at the University of Missouri and the University of North Carolina.

Both groups are aware of convergence, and both are grappling with ways to incorporate it into the curriculum. Indeed, non-adopters may even be in the process of allowing for more change. Yet, in general, these classifications represent where the types of programs were at the time this study was undertaken – the spring and summer of 2003.

All of the instructors interviewed for this study discussed changes that have been made because of convergence or are being considered because of convergence. All discussed the importance of a core of writing skills – reporting, storytelling, accuracy of facts and quotes, correctness of grammar and spelling, and correct use of AP style. The non-adopters, though, tended to place an emphasis on maintaining the basic fundamentals as they are currently being taught, while the innovators had begun the process of developing instruction and assignments geared toward helping students learn to write for more than one medium. Some of the non-adopters also indicated that one reason that they were not changing writing instruction was because they were part of large teaching teams that had established a sense of consistency in the structure of the program. Individual change was not encouraged. Change would only come when all faculty members would change their instruction.

The innovators – and the change in curriculum

The Allen White School of Journalism and Mass Communications at the University of Kansas is one of the programs first mentioned in conversations about convergence in the curriculum. The program has gone through a major change in the curriculum in response to convergence, and the dean, Jimmy Gentry, is a nationally-known consultant on the topic.

Rick Musser, who has been a faculty leader in the curriculum renovation, says the program has greatly changed due to an emphasis on teaching convergence skills.

> Primarily we have gone from separate first-level courses in PR and Advertising, Print, and Broadcast to one course for all students, and to second level courses that combine print and Broadcast or PR and Advertising. We also added the requirement for two advanced media courses...writing or production...where there was no requirement before.

Musser said Multimedia Reporting illustrates both the media skills the students develop and the kinds of instruction and assignment-development that the faculty must develop.

Multimedia Reporting, a second level course, requires students to work in teams to produce both newspaper stories and TV packages for each assignment. Students must work individually to complete the final course project, which requires them to develop a main story, links and a sidebar that is then plugged into a Dreamweaver template provided by the instructors. "We do not require extensive HTML skills. The point is to get them to think in terms of multimedia writing for the Web," Messer said.

"What we're learning as we make our way together through this thing called converged reporting is that good writing is simply good writing. And the more we do it, the more we see what is the same about reporting and writing for the media."

Another program considered an innovator in convergence is the Annenberg School for Communication at the University of Southern California. Assistant professor Laura Castaneda explained that the curriculum was redesigned to give students experience in print, broadcast and online. She was one of six faculty members who spent eight weeks during the summer of 2002 developing curriculum materials for converged curriculum – including a CD-ROM with video and sound files that would be edited by the students for assignments. The School also hired additional instructors to have faculty with expertise in the various mediums.

"We also wanted students to learn from experts in each particular field, not from someone who brushed up on broadcast, for instance, just to teach that section" Undergraduate class sections of 20 students and graduate class sections of 12 students would rotate through a team of three instructors – print, broadcast and online.

Castaneda, Sheila Murphy and Heather Burkett (2003) conducted an assessment of the students in the program. The researchers found that "the learning process was slowed and diluted a bit. However, students and faculty also believe that students made significant gains in almost every aspect including news judgment, writing, grammar, spelling, current events, AP Style, and ethics."

Castaneda said the faculty has revised the curriculum materials again. The faculty decided to use more materials from published textbooks.

> What we learned by developing curriculum materials is that: (a) it's very tough to do well, and (b) there isn't much reason to reinvent the wheel. In other words, there's lots of great material out there that can be used. The key is to at least occasionally have students write the same stories for print, broadcast and online, and to try and have the online section tie the "convergence" part together for them.

Indiana University has made a major paradigm shift in its introductory media writing class. IU has its journalism students take two classes that teach them how to write across several media platforms. The first class teaches them to write for newspapers, magazine and broadcast;. The second has students writing a major in-depth news or feature story that is six to eight pages long for the Web. "This requires chunking, writing teasers, creating bulleted lists, finding pull quotes," said IU journalism professor David Boeyink said. "In other words, the goal it to make this accessible to a Web audience that is looking for specific useable information."

Students in each lab section combine their efforts to produce a class magazine with all of their stories going into the magazine. Students work together on editing each other and with instructors on producing the online magazine using Web page-making software. The resulting product then is placed on an IU server and is linked to the School of Journalism website. "Each student serves as an editor for a classmate's story, reshaping it for a Web audience," Boeyink said.

John Russial, a journalism professor at the University of Oregon, said there has been an element of convergence in Oregon's program for years.

> (Convergence) is taken by majors in all of the school's sequences, and it

> has covered writing for electronic media for some time as well as print news, magazine, advertising, and public relations. It is a large-lecture course (70-120 students) that meets twice a week with once-a-week discussion sections. It would be impractical to have that many students learn to edit tape.

Russial also includes a class devoted to writing for the Web. "This isn't much, but we're on 10-week terms," he said. "I've used several types of broadcast-writing assignments, including a radio PSA and a TV news script based on notes and interview material. I don't have them write for the Web as an assignment."

Russial said he believes the diversity of platform experiences reinforce principles of writing taught for each area.

> In general terms, I think, writing for broadcast helps students by forcing them to be focused and conversational. Those aren't bad lessons for print writers, as anyone who has ever waded through a 48-word *New York Times* lead knows. I'm not sure I can say much beyond that, because students here take Media Writing before they take any more advanced writing or reporting courses. So it's not as if they're either learning a great deal about broadcast writing or unlearning anything about print writing.

Russial said he is not convinced that Web and print writing instruction are all that different. He pointed out that most print companies that have Internet sites tend to re-run the same article online. "Despite the hoopla, I think the Web is primarily print on a screen these days, and I don't see much potential impact on writing for print," he said.

Kent State University's move toward including convergence in the curriculum began when the School of Journalism and Mass Communication received a grant from the Poynter Institute for Media Studies, explained Candace Perkins Bowen, who is coordinator of Media Writing, the school's multi-section introductory writing course. The entire faculty spent a week at Poynter during the summer of 1996 to develop "Curriculum for the 21st Century. "That jump-started thinking about convergence," Bowen said. Training of faculty and funding for technology were key factors in the process. She said that workshops were held on campus for the entire faculty. She cited Carl E. Hirsch Media Convergence laboratory, a $500,000 state-of-the-art room donated by Alumnus Hirsch as a way to "show what is possible with convergence."

Another key factor is having faculty members who believe in convergence and can help sell it to their colleagues. "One faculty member spent last semester traveling to various publications that use convergence successfully. She is sharing that info." Of course that requires administrative support, too, to provide release time and funding for the faculty member.

Randy Sumpter, associate professor in the Journalism Department at Texas A&M University, incorporates convergence activities into his own courses but says the decision on how – or if – to include convergence is an individual faculty member's decision. "The department does not have a consensus outlook on convergence," Sumpter said. He said his decision to incorporate convergence into his teaching was cased by an ASNE Professional Summer Workshop.

> I think the activity that started me thinking carefully about new media and convergence was an ASNE Professional Summer fellowship I spent at the *San Antonio Express-News* in 1998. I spent sometime at their online newspaper, and I soon realized that the reporters for the website had to be a combination of print and broadcast specialists. I also noticed that many of the traditional print journalists were willing to write extra material for the website. They highly valued the website as a less mediated (less mediated by editors) outlet for the stories they covered.

Sumpter said he includes instruction on and practice with convergence skills in Editing for Mass Media.

> In that course, I take what I like to call a "theoretical" approach to convergence issues. We discuss format likes and unlikes among old and new media, particularly online news websites. We discuss how new media have influenced the definition of news employed by traditional media. We compare the "information density" among old and new media; we spend time comparing the technical execution of stories by old media with new media.

Sumpter said he assigns students to edit traditional news stories for a website and write display type for a Web page. Sumpter says that learning and practicing convergence skills helps the students with execution of "traditional" editing skills. "In editing, (convergence activities) gives them more practice. I mean just practice applying the traditional GSP (grammar, spelling, punctuation) and fact-checking skills you expect from a good editor. In that respect, it makes them better editors."

Boeyink said that Indiana has worked to prepare its faculty with summer workshops on writing across platforms. "In addition, the introductory courses have coordinators for all sections to ensure that instructors are prepared to teach the students about convergence and writing for diverse audiences. Lectures, exercises, and assignments are available online to assist instructors."

Oregon's Russial said supplemental preparation to learn to teach convergence has been minimal and not systematic.

> I taught myself HTML and some Web design years ago (I think most professors who teach Web writing probably did the same). I did take a couple of short workshops, but they weren't much help. I've tried to teach myself some of the other stuff, such as rudimentary nonlinear editing and use of digital video cameras. I could have taken more extensive workshops, and I will if I can find the time. Some faculty members have professional experience across media and already can work with different types of writing easily. For the others, some are more comfortable going beyond what they used to do professionally than others.

Ball State University in Muncie, Ind., also has incorporated convergence into the curriculum. Beginning in the fall of 2002, Ball State instituted a program that teaches students to write for different media. Professor Lori Demo explained that the Reporting 201 and 202 classes are taken by news, public relations, photography, design students, and news telecommunications majors, and are taught by both journalism and telecommunications professors. The courses are designed to that students learn about "the different writing needs of the different media." according to BSU professor Lori Demo. Demo said that one assignment in News 201 required students to report on a trend story and turn in a print, radio and Web version of the article.

Like Kent State, Ball State built a new convergence media center that helped provide impetus for the faculty to rethink the curriculum.

The non-adopters – and their rationale

The views from instructors at the University of North Carolina reflect a more traditional approach to writing instruction. "We do discuss convergence (as part of the course)," said Glenn W. Scott, who teaches newswriting at UNC, a course that is for the print media. "I try to keep my students focused on the idea that all newswriting needs to be seen as part of a whole. It's all storytelling about public events and issues. I want them to appreciate that newswriting is produced according to the identification of the audiences and according to the forms dictated by the technologies."

Juanita Darling, a second-year doctoral student and writing instructor at UNC, said that her students are trying to deal with the basics of journalistic writing. Darling said that she has little opportunity to include convergence in her writing classes because students are barely prepared for the level of competence expected in a college writing course. "Students struggle just to learn the basic concepts of news values and deadlines. Their only contact with the Web is as a source of information, such as basic documents and opposing views," she said.

Glen Feighery, a doctoral student and writing instructor, says that North Carolina has writing courses tailored to broadcast and electronic media, worries about the fundamentals of writing declarative, active-voice sentences: "I have read a great deal of empirical evidence to the effect that young media practitioners are losing a sense of subject-verb-object sentence construction. Most of these articles blame TV's habit of using participles such as 'War continuing today in Iraq.' " In other words, the rhythms and grammars of broadcast media may actually be doing harm to students learning to write for print media.

The University of Missouri School of Journalism also has a more traditional approach to teaching journalistic writing George Kennedy, professor, said faculty decided not to include convergence in writing instruction because of the perception that students needed the basics of news writing. "After extensive discussion with our broadcast and online faculty, we concluded *not* to include such writing assignments in the basic course," Kennedy said.

> The experts' belief is that students fare better by learning basic print reporting and writing first. That provides a platform from which they can move to other media and other styles. As they move into their sequences, our broadcast students say that they have to master a simpler, more conversational style. Online students find, usually, that the inverted pyramid serves them well. The print students who explore other media find little impact on their print writing skills.

Kennedy said that Missouri has not been all that quick to change when it comes to convergence.

> We've followed our usual conservative path of creating a variety of options for our students in new media and old media. For example, we have an "online" track within each of our new sequences that allows students to emphasize writing and producing online content while also meeting the requirements of News Editorial, Magazine, etc. We offer several one-hour 'Online Basics' courses to introduce the skills and then a couple of advanced courses in which students create and post content for either our *Digital Missourian* newspaper or KOMU s television Web site.

Kennedy said that the traditional approach to writing in the beginning courses serves as a foundation for students' writing skills. "We don't have a 'media writing' course. Our introductory course, required of all undergraduates regardless of sequence, is called 'News.' Its emphasis is understanding, gathering and writing news. We focus on print in that first course, in the belief that students who understand the basics of reporting and clear writing can then apply those basics in any medium – and in advertising and PR."

But even Missouri's traditionalist approach does include convergence.

> We overhauled our introductory newswriting course last year and now include discussions of and demonstrations of online and broadcast stories. We don't have students in the introductory course write for TV or the Web. That comes once they have

> chosen a sequence. In more advanced courses, students can learn as much as they want to of the skills required for broadcast and online. Those skills certainly include editing tape and creating Web pages.

Kennedy notes that faculty members at Missouri's faculty generally have been coming to terms with convergence more on a conceptual level than on a practical, skills-oriented level. "We have a large faculty, with multiple specialties. Most of us have tried to learn what convergence is but have not tried to learn, for example, HTML coding or video editing," Kennedy said.

While UNC's Scott said that convergence has not yet become a major part of the writing instruction curriculum in Chapel Hill, he said he believes that incorporating elements of it in the future is very important.

> Though the emphasis in my class is on writing for print, I also want the students to think about what other interactive features might accompany the text in an online format. This last point is especially important to me this semester because about a third of my students want to specialize in multimedia journalism. On an abstract level, I believe that students benefit from recognizing and appreciating the demands and constraints of various forms of news (media) writing.

Scott went on to say that media companies that have invested in convergence are not giving up on specialization. He cited *Tampa Tribune* executive editor Gil Thelan as saying that he is looking to hire "people with excellent skills in just one area." Scott said that college journalism programs can prepare students to work effectively in a converged news organization by helping them learn to work on collaborative projects and to be adaptable.

In other words, many media companies are still sending a specialization signal to both journalism/communications instructors and to potential employees. As a result, a more conservative approach of minimizing inclusion of convergence skills into the curriculum remains dominant.

Discussion and Conclusions

In this survey the majority of faculty members the researchers talked with had incorporated convergence into their teaching. Seven of the nine programs would be categorized as adopters, and even the two traditional programs included some elements of convergence in the curriculum. Departmental approaches ranged from all-faculty involvement in including convergence in the curriculum to programs where individuals include convergence discussion and activities in their own courses to programs where faculty members are staying with the traditional approach to preparing journalism majors and not including convergence beyond limited discussion.

The non-adopters of convergence believe their plates are already full with lessons devoted to news, feature and opinion writing as well as lessons on public relations and advertising writing. Meanwhile, the adopters argue that the principles of writing for each of the major medium – print, broadcast and online – are remarkably similar; therefore, teaching students to write for each platform reinforces basic principles of effective writing. The view is that clear, concise and accurate writing, in deadline situations, serves all three media well.

Some instructors advocate the benefits of teaching across media platforms for students. "My feeling is that the experience gives them more flexibility in using writing styles," Oregon's Russial said. "For example, broadcast writing has the potential to teach students stronger forms of narrative writing and simple sentences." Russial said.

Other instructors, particularly at the University of Missouri and the University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill, continue to teach the traditional journalism skills of reporting and writing for print. The instructors say that students do not have basic writing skills mastered to incorporate yet more writing styles into their writing courses. These instructors also note that even highly converged media companies still prefer employees who are specialists – reporters, editors, directors, designers and anchors.

The comments of these instructors underline that most journalism programs operate based on individual faculty members' decisions about what and how to teach. Both Kansas and Kent State seems to have a more program-wide approach to incorporating convergence into the curriculum. But in most programs, the decision about teaching convergence is more an individual instructor decision. If journalism programs are interested in changing the curriculum – such as incorporating convergence throughout the sequence – a challenge could be both to build consensus and then to actually have faculty member implement the curriculum change in their own teaching.

These conversations illustrated the significant influence that the commercial media and professional organizations have on the outlook of journalism educators – from Kent State's symposium at the Poynter Institute to Randy Sumpter's ASNE Professional Summer. Both innovators and traditionalists provide anecdotal examples from media professionals to support their views of whether or not to include convergence in the curriculum. Obviously, journalism faculty members should be attuned to the media industry as they teach students who will be seeking internships and jobs in the field. But beyond telling faculty members about industry trends, professional organizations and media outlets can help with curriculum change by providing faculty the opportunity to develop the skills that they will need to implement the change in their teaching.

Just as some newspapers were slower to adopt pagination for design or develop and maintain a website, some journalism programs are slower to adopt curriculum change, such as convergence. As with changes with newspapers, reasons for not changing the curriculum can range from lack of adequate funds to not having personnel to implement the change. A major gift targeted toward a convergence initiative can jump-start curriculum change. And just as some newspapers are partnering with cable or network television stations in their markets, other newspapers have chosen not to make those business connections. The same is true of journalism programs in making decisions about incorporating convergence.

Two issues that weren't asked as part of the survey also are factors in the decision about incorporating convergence. First, the overall design of the program. Some schools and colleges of journalism include majors besides journalism – broadcasting, public relations and advertising. The range of students and faculty in a program can affect curriculum change. Second, the new accrediting standard allowing students to take more hours in their major can provide a way to include convergence in a packed curriculum by enabling students to take more courses.

Sal Paolantonio, a reporter for ESPN who began his career covering politics in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, said: "Convergence journalism only works if you can report – if you are a reporter first. It's about finding information that people can use and need" (Spiker, 2003). The word, then, is that journalism schools tend to do the most for their students when they prepare them to be journalists first. They have to know how to write, but there's no story unless they can report, and while journalism schools are looking to update their mission statements, they must continue to teach their students how to think critically, report accurately and write effectively. Yet, because journalists face an information flow with that is continuous and perpetual because of the existence of the Internet, new professional stresses have emerged, including the possibility that they will be asked to re-purpose their work for more than one medium. Likewise, the South Florida showed the while a high percentage of professional journalists think journalism students should learn multimedia skills, a majority of the respondents – 63 percent – also agreed that journalism students should specialize in one area of the profession (Huang *et al.*, 10).

Finally, Brent Cunningham, editor of the *Columbia Journalism Review*, says the debate about journalism schools should never be settled. "If journalism is about making sense of the world, and the world is always changing, then there should always be people searching for ways to make journalism better. But at the same time, the soul of good journalism – thorough, tough reporting and clear writing – has never changed, and shouldn't" (Cunningham, 20).

So it is with media writing instruction. The debate will go on about the role of convergence in the journalism curriculum, but the fundamentals of journalistic writing remain the same.

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Pinpointing Predictors of Print Media Career Consideration: An Assessment of the Role of Writing Self-Efficacy Student Values and High School Media Experience

by

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> "I'm real disappointed that more kids are not going into print journalism"
>
> "We get somewhat frustrated at the University of XXXXX journalism department. Last year, out of the entire book [of upcoming graduates], there were four students who were interested in newspaper journalism."

These comments from newspaper editors in a 1998 study of newspaper diversity illustrate the frustration many face when they look at the crop of future print journalists (Daniels, 1999). Four years later, little has changed. The most recent data from the Annual Survey of Journalism and Mass Communication graduates show the percentage of bachelor degree recipients who studied news-editorial journalism fell from 17.3% in 1998 to 13.9% in 2001 (Becker, Vlad, Huh, & Daniels, 2002). Still, nearly one-third of the graduates say they worked on their campus newspaper, a figure that has been fairly consistent over the last four or five years (Becker et al., 2002). At the same time, among scholastic media outlets, high school newspapers attract the greatest number of students (Dvorak, 2001). Historically, journalism majors and working journalists have cited their love of writing as a major factor in their decision to pursue journalism as a career. It remains to be seen whether, in fact, it is the love of writing or one's belief in his or her own writing ability that is most influential in a person's journalism career decision.

Building on decades of research on journalism career choice and more recent studies of writing self-efficacy and student career values, this study examines the relationship between high school students' career values, writing self-efficacy and one's likelihood to consider a print journalism career. Additionally, the study examines whether having high school print media experience has any impact on whether a high school student is likely to select a career in print media. The findings from the study will add a new dimension to the understanding of the one's career choices during high school, a crucial phase in a person's vocational development.

Literature Review

One consistent theme in the literature on journalism career choice is that a love of writing was the most important reason students pursued careers in journalism. This was true even in the earliest of the studies where students acknowledged journalism paid less than other professions.

These students still chose journalism because of their love of writing (Bowers, 1974; Lubell, 1959; Weigle, 1957). Some studies were more sophisticated in their analysis of this "love of writing." While students gave writing as the primary reason for selecting the news-editorial major, one study showed it was a minor influence for other areas of study such as advertising or radio-tv-film (Brinkman & Jugenheimer, 1977). By asking the question as it relates to selection of college major instead of selection of career, Brinkman and Jugenheimer (1977) suggested there may be other factors that might intervene between one's positive writing experience in high school and the decision made post-college in terms of a career. The actual relationship between a student's career decision and his or her interest in such things as "writing" remains virtually unexplored in the literature.

Several studies used the fact that students had experience on high school publications as a variable for analyzing other survey responses. One study found publication-experienced students were four times more likely than none publication-experienced students to choose communication as a college major (Vahl, 1987) Other studies documented that it was students' exposure to high school journalism that was the single most important factor in prompting them to consider majoring in journalism (Brinkman & Jugenheimer, 1977; Cranford, 1960; Dodd, Tipton, & Sumpter, 1989). Results from an experiment involving a distance education high school journalism course showed students with journalistic instruction had more improved scores on standardized writing tests score than non-journalism students (Morgan & Dvorak, 1994).

More recent research has shown that high school journalism experience is a predictor of self-efficacy for students entering a beginning media writing course (Collins & Bissell, 2002). Students with high school yearbook experience, in particular, had more self-efficacy than students without such experience (Collins & Bissell, 2002). A second study found students with high school journalism experience performed better on writing pre-tests, administered at the beginning of their media writing course (Bissell & Collins, 2001). Testing self-efficacy theories from education and psychology, this new line of research in journalism/mass communication added the "journalism" dimension to the literature on writing self-efficacy. On the other hand, the issue of career decisions of these students was not addressed.

In addition to research on the role of publication experience on career decisions and self-efficacy, other studies have identified certain values common in journalism or mass communication students (Parsons, 1989; Smith, 1987; Surlin, 1976). Additionally, those values varied according to the sequence in which the students were enrolled. Bowers (1974) found journalism majors perceived journalism as "interesting work" and was favorable profession for its "usefulness in society." Surlin (1976) found that journalism students were more concerned than their counterparts in other communications majors, about ethics and philosophy. A later study found news-editorial majors wanted a career that included being of service to informing the public (Parsons, 1989). Print journalism students were also motivated more by a desire to write and motivated less by material success. The data showed that nearly one-fourth of these same news-editorial majors knew what they wanted to major in before their senior year in high school.

Based on the findings in the literature on journalism career choice, writing self-efficacy and student values, the following hypotheses were tested:

H1: Students with print media experience during high school will have a higher writing self-efficacy than those without high school print media experience.

H2: Students with print media experience during high school will have greater "enjoyment" of writing than those without high school print media experience.

H3: Students with print media experience during high school will be more likely to consider a print media career than other students surveyed.

H4: The higher the number of hours spent with newspapers, yearbook or literary magazine, the greater the writing self-efficacy.

H5: The higher the number of hours spent with newspapers, yearbook or literary magazine, the more likely students are to "enjoy" writing.

H6: Service to society values will be positively related to one's likelihood to consider a print journalism career

H7: Public information values will be positively related to one's likelihood to consider a print journalism career.

H8: Creativity values will be negatively related to one's likelihood to consider a print journalism career.

Methodology

In the spring of 2002, the author administered a questionnaire to 538 urban high school students in classrooms in two Southern states. Unlike previous studies on journalism careers, which focused only on high school journalists (mostly those attending scholastic journalism conferences), this survey included respondents who were not necessarily involved in high school media outlets. To be included in the sample, all respondents were students in so-called "media-rich environments" at eight urban high schools that had at least three media outlets (newspaper, TV program, yearbook, etc). All eight schools were located in cities that fit the 1990 U.S. Census Bureau definition[1] of urbanized area (UA), which have a minimum of 50,000 persons and 1,000 persons per square mile and a population of 50,000 residents or more. This is not to be confused with "inner city" or what the U.S. Census Bureau calls "central city," which, along with areas designated as "urban fringe" (suburbs), are sub-components of an urbanized area. Restricting the population to urban high schools decreased the chances of variability on some independent variables (i.e., socioeconomic status, race). The higher the number of students in fewer categories, the more likely statistically significant relationships between the concepts in the model would be identified.

A contact person (usually a journalism adviser) at each of the eight sites assisted in identifying the media classes and 12th grade English classes. As a required course, English courses were identified as ways to locate non-media involved seniors. 12th graders were more likely than underclassmen to have both taken media-related classes thought seriously about career plans. Students participated simply based on their being a member of an identified class. While the type of classes surveyed varied depending on the level of access granted at a particular school, typically two-thirds of the classes were media classes and the remaining third were 12th grade English classes. Media classes were more desirable because students in such classes were more likely to be familiar enough with the types of media to be able to say whether or not they were considering a particular area of media as a career. The author personally administered the survey on-site in each class at all eight sites.

High school print media experience was measured with a checklist of media activities, which included school newspaper, local newspaper, yearbook and literary magazine. A "yes" response for any of these four media represented high school print media experience. *Hours of high school print media experience* is a summed variable of number of hours spent with each media outlet. *Writing self-efficacy* was measured with Likert scale responses to the statement "I am a good writer". Responses were coded from 1 to 5 with "5" being strongly agree and "3" representing "don't know." *Level of enjoyment of writing* was also measured with Likert scale responses to the statement "I enjoy writing". Responses were coded from 1 to 5 with "5" being strongly agree and "3" representing "don't know."

Included in the instrument were 10 items drawn from the *1998 National Survey of Journalism and Mass Communication Graduates* which asked on a five-point scale (strongly agree to strongly disagree) about career values such as "working with visuals," "jobs that offers lot of variety and change," and "working with people." Factor analysis of the items revealed three underlying dimensions:

1) "Public information" values (Cronbach's alpha reliability = .77), which included items on helping people understand the world around them" (factor loading =.75) and giving people information they can use (factor loading =.76).

2) "Creativity" values (Cronbach's alpha reliability= .64), which included items on creative area of work (factor loading = .90) and the media as interesting (factor loading = .56).

3) "Service to people" values (Cronbach's alpha reliability = .68), which included items on serving society (factor loading = .36) and working with people (factor loading = .95) the inter-relationship between the question items for each variable in the model.

The three pairs of items were used to construct measures of three values: *public information*, *creativity*, and *service to people*. To test the aforementioned hypotheses, these measures were correlated with print media career consideration. Additionally, regression

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[1] While the U.S. Census Bureau recently published *Urban and Rural Classification Census 2000*, the list of urbanized areas that fit the latest classification was not expected to be released until late March 2002.

analysis was conducted to identify the degree to which the three values, high school print media experience, writing self-efficacy, and writing enjoyment predicted students print media career consideration.

Using the Statistical Program for the Social Sciences (SPSS), the researcher entered data from the questionnaires for further analysis of the responses. Pearson's Product Moment Correlations and Multiple analyses were performed to test the hypothesized relationships between variables.

Findings

The respondents in the survey, which is the center of this dissertation, represent a cross-section of students from various racial backgrounds and socioeconomic levels. Not surprisingly, the majority of them (54.9%) were 12th graders. As shown below in Table 1, only 20 percent of the students were either freshmen or sophomores. As mentioned earlier, the focus on seniors was deliberate, and utilizing 12th grade English classes for the study helped to ensure that the respondents would be those most likely to be able to respond to questions about media decisions. At the same time, 26 ninth graders completed surveys. It should be noted that the majority of the ninth graders who participated were in a magnet school setting, where many had media courses during their middle school years. This enabled them to respond to questions about their preferences.

Also in Table 1, it should be noted that, like the overall population of the United States and in most classrooms, women outnumbered men in the sample. There was a 6-to-4 split of women to men in the sample for this project. There were a number of cases where only one or two males were in the classrooms visited for this project. Nonetheless, 221 men did complete the survey compared to the 313 women.

Despite efforts to maximize opportunities for respondents from racial minority groups, only one minority group was well-represented in this sample. A quarter of the respondents identified themselves as "African-American, non-Hispanic." The next highest racial minority group was made up of those who identified themselves as mixed (5.3%). Nearly two-thirds of the sample was white. This is somewhat surprising since most of the urban school systems where the eight high schools were located were not predominantly white. In several cases, the school was predominantly African-American, but the media classes were almost all white.

The majority of the classes involved in this research project were media-related classes at the eight high schools. Therefore, the variables of most interest were those indicating the media in which students were involved. It is not surprising that the outlets most likely to involve students were the school newspaper and yearbook (Table 2). Almost as many students were members of the yearbook staff. Historically, the high school annual, or the yearbook, and the school newspaper are the most traditional of the media outlets. It should be noted that respondents were allowed to select multiple media activities in which they were involved. The year most commonly listed as the year when the students were involved in media was 11th grade (Table 2). Nearly 200 students, or 36.7%, indicated that were involved in media in 11th grade. Fewer students were involved up until graduation (during their senior year). Not surprising, ninth grade was the year least cited as a year one was involved in media. Typically, school media staffs choose from those students who have some experience in other high school activities or have developed a talent recognized by teachers in previous English or writing classes. Additionally, involvement in media tends to trail off in the senior year as students shift their attention to graduation and preparing for college.

Table 3 shows that the most frequently given figure for hours per week spent doing media activities was "5 hours per week." Only those respondents who indicated they were involved in the particular activity answered this question. This is quite likely reflective of the time spent on these activities in class. Respondents were allowed to include class time in their tally of their time spent per week. While the mode is fairly consistent across media, the mean number of hours ranges from a high of 7.68 hours for yearbook to just 3.57 hours for the local newspaper. With its greater variability, the mean measure will be most important in determining whether frequency of involvement is a factor in one's career decision.

Overall, the average student involved in print media spent about 7 hours per week with that activity. Respondents involved with print media of any sort were coded "2" and those not involved were coded "1." For the items associated with the values public information, service to people and creativity, a summed scored of the two 5-point scale items was created. The highest possible summed score was "10." For all three, the students in the sample ranged from 7.67 to 8.98 (Table 4). On the other hand, writing self-efficacy and writing enjoyment were only tested with one item, which had a maximum score of "5." With scores greater than 3.5 for both, the students in this survey generally enjoyed writing believed they were good writer. On the other hand, their likelihood to consider media was neutral at best as the maximum score for print consideration was 10.00. Students' media career consideration was rated at 4.58.

To assess print media experience in high school, the author tested the relationship between values such as providing public information and service to people and writing self-efficacy. As Table 5 shows, with the exception of hours spent with high school print media, these variables all appear to be related to one another. Not surprising writing enjoyment and writing self-efficacy are highly related (r = . 65, p<.01). The second highest correlation is between writing enjoyment and print media career consideration (r = .57, p < .01). There was also a high correlation between the value of service to people and providing public information (r = .56, p < .01). It should be noted that correlation does not necessarily reflect causality.

Hypothesis 1 was supported as the data show print media experience is positively related to students' writing self-efficacy (r = .27, p< .01). Hypothesis 2 was supported as the data show those who worked on print media are also more likely to enjoy writing. Students with print media experience in high school are also more likely to choose a print media career (r = .29 p < .01), thus supporting Hypothesis 3. On the other hand, the number of hours spent with newspapers, yearbook or literary magazine is neither related to writing self-efficacy or writing enjoyment. Thus, Hypotheses 4 and 5 were not supported.

The data show that the service to society, public information and creativity are all career values that are positively related to the likelihood to consider a print journalism career. Therefore, hypotheses 6 and 7 were supported. Because creativity, which is often associated more with fields such as graphic arts or advertising, was also positively related to print journalism career consideration (r = .31, p < .01), hypothesis 8 was not supported.

The final phase of the data analysis was aimed at assessing just how much these variables of high school media experience, career values, writing self-efficacy and writing enjoyment help predict whether a student is likely to choose a career in print media. As Table 6 shows, when these variables were all regressed against the outcome variable, print media career consideration, only one variable is a significant predictor- writing enjoyment ($B = .48$, $p < .01$).

Discussion

Most of the previous research on journalism career decision-making has been conducted with samples of college journalism majors reflecting on their career decisions. Only a few studies have assessed the career decisions of high school students while they are in the process of making them. Those not restricted to scholastic journalism conventions were conducted using standardized test question data. This study breaks from this tradition by including a sample of the general population of students at urban high schools.

Despite this break with tradition, the data here ultimately support the findings in previous research. Even though career values such as providing public information and creativity are related to having print media experience and writing enjoyment, it is still solely the writing enjoyment that is predictive of one's likelihood to consider a print media career. Even though 217 students were involved in some form of print media experience in high school, such experience or the hours spent doing such an active are not predictive of one's likelihood to choose a print media career. While writing self-efficacy may be related to how a student performs in an introductory media writing class, such self-efficacy is apparently not a predictor of one's likelihood to actually make a career of working in the print media.

The data in this study underscore the decades of research that shows students get into traditional print journalism because they like to write. Perhaps finding more of these students who like to write is the answer to recruiting more students to work at newspapers and magazines. These results call into question the true impact of working on the high school newspaper, yearbook or literary on a student's career plans at least initially at the high school level. It is entirely possible that those who end up going into print media professionally credit their high school media experiences. However, at the point they are in high school, such experiences are less influential in what they think they want to pursue for a career.

There are some limitations to this study that are important to mention. In particular, the measures for writing self-efficacy and writing enjoyment are based on single items. Because of the length of the questionnaire, there were limited opportunities to explore a range of print journalism careers such as copy editing, reporting, section editing, etc. Additional questions would perhaps have further clarified the role of high school media experience.

Future research might examine whether the same phenomenon is true for students in the area of broadcast journalism, advertising-PR, or media production. Adaptation of more sophisticated measures of writing self-efficacy and writing enjoyment might also result in different results. Finally, use of qualitative methods such as interviews or focus groups might help to explain the print media career decisions at a much deeper level.

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Table 2

Print Media Experience of Respondents*

Type of Media	Frequency	N	Valid %
Local or Community Newspaper	16	525	3.0
School Newspaper	92	523	17.6
Yearbook	84	525	16.0
Literary Magazine	58	525	11.0
None of the Above	243	524	46.4

Years of Involvement in Media	Frequency	N	Valid %
9th grade	72	532	13.5
10th grade	112	531	21.1
11th grade	195	532	36.7
12th grade	133	531	25.0
Never involved in school media	226	532	42.5

* Multiple response item

Table 3

Number of Hours Respondents Spent With Media Activities Each Week

Activity	Mean	SD	Mode	N
Local or Community Newspaper	3.57	2.79	1	16
School Newspaper	6.61	5.93	5	92
Yearbook	7.68	6.09	5	84
Literary Magazine	4.23	2.54	5	58

Table 1

Demographic Characteristics of Sample

Present Grade Level	Frequency	Valid %
9th grade	26	4.9
10th grade	78	14.6
11th grade	137	25.7
12th grade	293	54.9
N	534	100.0

Gender	Frequency	Valid %
Male	221	41.4
Female	313	58.6
N	534	100.0

Race or National Origin	Frequency	Valid %
African-American, non-Hispanic	135	25.4
African-American Hispanic	4	.8
Hispanic, non-African-American	6	1.1
Asian American	21	4.0
Native American (American Indian/Alaskan Native)	3	.6
White, non-Hispanic	332	62.5
Pacific-Islander American	2	.4
Mixed ethnicity/other	28	5.3
N	531	100.0

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Table 4

Means and Standard Deviations for Predictors and Print Career Consideration

Index	M	SD
Hours Spent with H.S. Print Media	7.08	5.77
H.S. Print Media Experience(1 = no ;2 = yes)	2.00	0.5
Value: Public information	7.67	1.51
Value: Service to people	7.91	1.61
Value: Creativity	8.98	1.18
Writing self-efficacy ("I am a good writer")	3.66	1.04
Writing enjoyment ("I enjoy writing")	3.50	1.26
Print Career Consideration	4.58	2.19

Table 5

Correlation Between Media Experience, Values and Print Career Consideration

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Hours Spent with H.S. Print Media	--							
H.S. Print Media Experience	-.04	--						
Value: Public information	-.06	.08	--					
Value: Service to people	.10	.12**	.56**	--				
Value: Creativity	-.03	.21**	.29**	.24**	--			
Writing self-efficacy ("I am a good writer")	.01	.27**	.26**	.19**	.40**	--		
Writing enjoyment ("I enjoy writing")	.00	.29**	.27**	.18**	.43**	.65**	--	
Print Career Consideration	.08	.29**	.23**	.19**	.31**	.46**	.57**	--

*p<.05 **p<.01

Table 6

Relationship of Media Experience, Writing and Career Values to Print Career Consideration

Multiple Regression Analysis

Variable	Beta
Hours Spent with H.S. Print Media	.08
H.S. Print Media Experience	-.03
Value: Public information	.09
Value: Service to people	.10
Value: Creativity	.05
Writing self-efficacy ("I am a good writer")	.09
Writing enjoyment ("I enjoy writing")	.48**
Multiple R	.39
Adjusted R^2	.37

*p<.05 **p<.01

CHARACTERISTICS OF JOURNALISTIC MEDIA
AND JOURNALISM EDUCATORS
IN INNER-CITY HIGH SCHOOLS

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CHARACTERISTICS OF JOURNALISTIC MEDIA AND JOURNALISM EDUCATORS IN INNER-CITY HIGH SCHOOLS

Abstract

This national study of 2,089 U.S. high schools compares journalistic activities in nearly 300 inner-city schools with suburban and rural/small-town schools. Specifically, it examines the prevalence of newspapers, news magazines, radio, television, online publications and yearbooks in the three major classifications of schools. Also, it compares various demographic and psychographic characteristics of the journalism educators within inner-city schools and compares those traits with teachers in schools generally.

CHARACTERISTICS OF JOURNALISTIC MEDIA AND JOURNALISM EDUCATORS IN INNER-CITY HIGH SCHOOLS

Since *Captive Voices* first put scholastic journalism under the microscope in 1974, educators and media professionals alike have been concerned about the diversity – or lack of it — in students working on school newspapers and other media, and studying related curriculum. This concern has been the basis for summer workshops, seed money to support failing programs, grants for teacher training and a long list of other related initiatives. Yet the actual research supporting a decline in inner-city school programs and minority participation has been sparse, and, while there may be real reason for concern, current statistics are not necessarily there to support it.

Review of Literature

What has been published generally falls into two categories: a limited amount of research directly related to the numbers and health of minority programs, though much of this focuses on one region or city; and anecdotal or general references to the condition of such programs, often in professional media organization publications that are also concerned about their own futures and how these might relate to youth in the pipeline.

Mary Arnold's 1993 paper, presented at the annual convention of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, appears to be the only research hitting the question head on and with a national perspective. In "Inner City High School Newspapers: An Obituary?" Arnold, then program associate for scholastic journalism at The University of Iowa, says the impetus for her paper came from reporters who called her and "wanted to know if anyone had done any research on how many inner-city schools had stopped publishing newspapers in recent years."[1] Arnold indicates the reporters wanted proof – hard facts and statistics – to "know for sure" if such papers really were dying. At this point, she says she "vowed not to get caught again" and began her research.[2]

When she began her literature review, she discovered "…no one had addressed how many inner-city school newspapers had died in recent years and why."[3] Thus her research instrument was a one-page questionnaire that went to a random sample of 267, or 25 percent, of the principals at large metropolitan (inner city) schools across the country with follow-up calls to a random group of nonrespondents. The five items on Arnold's questionnaire asked the principals "if their school publishes a newspaper, had ever published one, why it stopped (if it had), and how often the paper is (or was) published."[4]

Survey results do show some reason to worry about inner-city newspapers. Nineteen of these schools had stopped publishing their newspapers, which Arnold notes, if generalized to the whole population of inner city schools, would mean "almost 13 percent – about one in eight – have stopped publishing newspapers." An even more "alarming aspect," Arnold says, is "most of the schools that have stopped publishing . . . have done so in the last five years."[5]

However, Arnold concludes inner-city papers are not "fading into oblivion." She says, although the papers have problems with finances, frequency and quality, "the student newspaper is still alive in 85 percent of the nation's inner city schools."[6]

When Christopher Callahan, assistant dean of the College of Journalism at the University of Maryland, conducted a review of literature for his paper, "Race as a Factor in Student Participation in High School Journalism," he found ". . . the body of literature that has developed on high school journalism is rather thin, especially on the linkage between high school newspapers and race."[7] Callahan's 1996 study focuses on Maryland high schools, which, he indicates, "roughly reflect the racial breakdown of the nation (29.4 percent minority population compared to 24.4 percent nationally)."[8] While Callahan found "85.6 percent of all 160 non-vocational, non-special needs public high schools in Maryland published student newspapers," these break down to 91.7 percent of white schools in this group but only 67.5 percent of those with a black plurality.[9] This paints a more negative picture than Arnold's research does.

Linda Jones, associate professor of journalism and communication studies at Roosevelt University in Chicago, also studied trends in inner-city schools' journalism and newspaper programs in one locale. Her paper, "A 'Health Appraisal' of Student Newspapers in the Chicago Public Schools," explores more about the training of these papers' advisers and about censorship than increase or decrease in numbers of programs. However, she begins her introduction by citing a December 1992 article in *Editor & Publisher* by Mark Fitzgerald, "Saved – For Now," which reports a "timely fund-raising drive" helped Chicago school administrators save newspapers and other extra-curricular activities such as sports.[10]

Jones does show in her research that 88 of 114 public and private schools in Chicago – or 77 percent – publish newspapers. These, however, often have limited student free expression, less adequately trained advisers than in the past,[11] and advisers who aren't even sure what their budgets are.[12] Her research also does not show anything about changes in number of programs although an anecdotal section quotes "one veteran of 30 years of advising" who recalled the "glory days of Chicago's big public schools when many were equipped with their own print shops" and when his school published "30 issues a year – almost weekly." He said this school, where he no longer teaches, now publishes "two issues and a news magazine all year."[13] Jones also notes in the conclusion: "Of eight public schools without newspapers, seven are located in the South Side or West Side," areas that are largely minority.[14]

Other investigations with limited populations include Terry Vander Hayden's 1989 paper, "Minorities in High School Journalism: A Survey of Kentucky Schools," and Celia McDuff's Journalism Education Association Master Journalism Educator project and the report of it in *Communication: Journalism Education Today*, which explores minority enrollment in Kansas schools. Vander Hayden reports, with 31 teachers at 100 randomly selected schools responding, 4 percent of journalism classes, 8.1 percent of newspaper staffers and 5.5 percent of yearbook staffers are minorities,[15]

McDuff found "low minority enrollment in scholastic journalism programs" in Kansas, with 6.4 percent of publication staffs minority, compared to 17.8 percent of the overall student population. Her conclusion: "If the research in this study of Kansas schools is representative of other states, then the future looks bleak for the efforts of the American Society of Newspaper Editors to bring the percentage of minorities in print journalism to 23 percent by the year 2000."[16] What is unclear in studies covering specific areas like Chicago, Kentucky or Kansas is the answer to McDuff's "if"—are these areas representative?

One additional survey, from Spring 1993, might even indicate some hope for minority high school journalists. "The State of High School Journalism," by Lyle D. Olson, Roger Van Ommeren and Marshel Rossow, in *Communication: Journalism Education Today* reports the results of their survey of scholastic press association directors. Although covering many other aspects of such programs, the findings include a statement that 45 percent of the directors agreed there were "more minority students in journalism today than there were five years ago," and 40 percent said their state press association had "programs geared specifically toward minority students. . . ."[17]

Even as early as the 1970s, anecdotal reports have added to the concern for inner-city and other minority programs. The Robert F. Kennedy Memorial's Commission of Inquiry into High School Journalism expresses this in 1974 in *Captive Voices: High School Journalism in America.* Commission hearings took place in six cities across the country in Spring 1973 — Charlotte, N.C.; New York, N.Y.; San Antonio, Texas; San Francisco, Calif.; South Bend, Ind.; and Washington, D.C. – and students at 39 high schools in 30 states plus 388 teachers/advisers answered a series of survey questions. It should be noted, however, in 38 of the 39 schools that the students represented, a school newspaper was published and a magazine was published at the other school. Also, the teachers' names for the survey came from the Journalism Education Association and the

National Council of Teachers of English, and questions to them assumed there was some form of student publication or journalism course.[18] No questions were asked about newspapers ceasing to print. The Commission, however, concluded:

> In the nation's capital, with a predominantly black population and an overwhelmingly black public school population, school journalism, with few exceptions, is dying.[19]

The Commission found that not only in Washington, but in other schools where minority students constitute a large majority of the population, there tend to be fewer school papers or other journalistic media than in predominantly white schools; media outlets that do exist at these schools usually exhibit little relevance to the school experience.[20]

The Freedom Forum's 1994 look at high school journalism, *Death By Cheeseburger*, reports similar problems with student publications in areas with diverse populations, again using mostly anecdotal findings. Citing a drop in members of national scholastic journalism organizations, the book points out such a decrease "(t)o some extent parallels the drop in the total number of students in U.S. Schools." Then it goes on to indicate "Q(uill) & S(croll) Executive Director Richard Johns says it also reflects a decline in the number of student newspapers in urban schools."[21]

Cheeseburger says, ". . . segregated urban schools are likely to have weak, infrequently published newspapers if any at all."[22] The book then includes a page-long case history of *The Washington Post* reporter Retha Hill's effort, with support from The Freedom Forum, to help D.C. schools' journalism programs. Her year-long stint as journalist in residence in 1992-1993 began with her finding "a glowing ember here and there but rarely a spark of inspired, regularly published, free and open student news and expression."[23] Only three of the city's public high schools had that year published more than three issues of their student newspapers.[24] Any real results from Hill's work were not available by the time *Death By Cheeseburger* was published in 1994.

From these rather limited direct studies and investigations, scholastic media educators and professional journalism organizations appear to have based much of their concern about the plight of inner-city and minority journalism. Two additional situations may also tie in with their interest: (1) the American Society of Newspaper Editors' goal to have newspaper employment reflect racial diversity of the country by 2025[25] and (2) several studies, including one conducted by ASNE and The Freedom Forum in 1999, showing a much higher percentage of African-American journalists choose their careers during high school or earlier (56 percent) than white journalists (39 percent).[26] Both these challenges to the future of daily commercial media might contribute to the urgency such organizations feel to recruit more minorities and to do so at a younger age. This perhaps contributes to statements like the following, which don't always cite specific research statistics:

In the *2001 Annual Report of the Dow Jones Newspaper Fund*, Inc., its president Albert R. Hunt describes in his introduction a vignette of students "in a tough neighborhood on the west side of Chicago," working on their newspaper. He says this paper was "launched with the help of the Dow Jones Newspaper Fund . . . to encourage more young minorities to consider a career in journalism." He further states that to "even come close to ASNE's goal by 2025. . . will require a huge influx in the number of African-American, Hispanic and Asian-American journalists." He says, "This, the Newspaper Fund concluded, was possible only if interest is whetted early on, by high school; yet, with budget restraints, many inner-city schools – parochial as well as public – are without school newspapers."[27]

In a press release, dated Aug. 3, 2001, announcing the completion of the first summer of the ASNE High School Institute, project director Diana Mitsu Klos, writes, "Another key goal of the ASNE initiative is to encourage applications from school districts in urban and isolated rural areas where journalism programs have disappeared or are under stress. Of the 200 schools represented (in the Summer 2001 workshops), 107 have minority student populations of 41 percent or higher."[28]

The premier issue of *Foundation Update: Reaching Today's Youth and Tomorrow's Readers* from the Newspaper Association of America Foundation includes an article entitled "Student Journalism: Reaching Out and Getting Back." In it, Milton Coleman, deputy managing editor of *The Washington Post*, is quoted as saying, "I had read the ASNE report that says young people tend to make up their minds early about career choices and had many conversations with editors at minority journalist conventions about how to increase the pipeline." He then asked *Post* columnist Dorothy Gilliam, former president of the National Association of Black Journalists, "to spearhead an effort to get more talented minorities into the newspaper business by creating closer newspaper-to-schools connections." Gilliam says, "I spent much of 1997 researching the issue and discovered that not a single high school in D.C. had a school newspaper that year and I was outraged." Gilliam then designed the *Post*'s Young Journalists Development Project to strengthen scholastic journalism in high schools and universities in the District of Columbia, Maryland and Virginia areas.[29]

And, finally, in the Report on the Proceedings of The Open Society Institute Roundtable on High School Journalism, New York City, Feb. 17, 1999, Rosalind Stark, reporter, wrote, in the "On Diversity" section: "Several participants described a fact of life among student publications – schools in areas with high minority enrollments have fewer school newspapers. As well, there are problems recruiting minority students in predominantly white schools." A 1992 JEA survey showed that the combined total for journalism students of color – 18 percent – falls considerably behind the percentage of students of color – 26 percent – in the total school population. [30]

The last is a good example of the problems with much that has been reported about minorities in high school journalism. The findings appear to indicate more than they actually do. While this was indeed a "1992 JEA survey," which hints at a national scope, the survey itself covers teachers in Kansas with little to show if Kansas is typical of the rest of the country. Coupled with the use of other anecdotal and partial information to show why minority high school programs need more support yet the very real worry about diversity in tomorrow's newsrooms, this lack of current research in the area indicates a need for more studies. The final section of Jones's research about Chicago details suggestions for "Further Research."[31]

Arnold wrote, "The nation's newspaper industry and the colleges and universities who seek to diversify their staffs and student bodies must continue to monitor inner-city schools closely."[32] Thus, we have undertaken in this study the task of looking more closely at journalism offerings within inner-city high schools.

Research Questions

Three research questions seem to flow from the review of literature. Besides examining answers to each, we will attempt to add other pertinent details that will add context and detail.

RQ1: Compared with the nation's schools overall, to what extent are newspapers and news magazines published in inner-city high schools?

RQ2: Compared with the nation's schools overall, to what extent are other media found in inner-city high schools? These media include radio, television, online publications, news magazines and yearbooks.

RQ3: What are demographic and psychographic comparisons between media educators in inner-city high schools and those nationally (e.g., relationship with local media professionals, gender, race, areas of certification, degrees, freedom of advising, and professional participation in things like workshops)?

Methodology

This study of journalistic media extensiveness in the nation's high schools was done in conjunction with the staff of the Radio and Television News Directors Foundation, and with funding support from the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation. A 66-question survey was constructed and then pretested among Washington, D.C., area high school teachers in early August 2001.

The survey was then modified and mailed in September 2001 to every high school (n=15,090) in the country for which we had a mailing address. The data base used was that of the Quill and Scroll Society's, headquartered at The University of Iowa. Because of school closings or bad addresses, 132 surveys were returned unopened. We followed up with a second mailing in October 2001.

By early in 2002, we had received 2,096 surveys, 2,089 of which were usable. The total response rate was 14 percent. The survey was addressed to "Journalism Educator," but the cover letter asked the educators to direct the survey to the person responsible for teaching or advising electronic journalism. Because a number of schools do not offer radio, TV or online journalism courses or activities, the current survey is probably weighted somewhat heavily in favor of schools that support electronic journalism. Another problem with a mail survey like this, even with the follow-up mailing, is that those with media programs are the ones most likely to respond. However, after making comparisons with two other national surveys that involved random samples of schools,[33] we found much consistency in a number of comparable areas – leading us to conclude that the current survey is generally reflective of the status of journalism in the nation's high schools.

A key variable in this study is the inner-city school. We combined two components of the data to form this variable: large-city schools (city population 100,000 to 500,000) and very large-city schools (city population more than 500,000). Of the nearly 300 schools that were in the inner city, more than 54 percent of them had minority populations that were above 50 percent. Nearly 73 percent of the inner-city schools had minority populations that were above 35 percent. Suburbs of these large cities and smaller cities and towns were used in the analysis for comparisons. The data were analyzed using the SPSS program.

Results and Discussion

RQ1: Compared with the nation's schools overall, to what extent are newspapers and news magazines published in inner-city high schools?

Newspapers are published in 88.9 percent of inner-city schools (n=298) compared with 89.7 percent of large-city suburban schools (n=378) and only 80.7 percent of rural and small-town schools (n=1,395). These are statistically significant differences ($X^2=24.74$, df=2, $p<.001$). The total number of schools in this part of the analysis is 2,071.

Because news magazines are so similar to newspapers in content and format in many schools, and some schools have these instead of traditional newspapers – or in addition to them – we also analyzed the extensiveness of news magazines. In inner-city schools, 9.1 percent have a news magazine; in large-city suburban schools, 9.8 percent have one; and in rural and small-town schools only 5.2 percent have one. ($X^2=13.78$, df=2, $p<.01$).

Inner-city schools in large cities have sizeable minority populations. Contrary to the information we explored in the review of literature, we were surprised to find that the extensiveness of newspapers and news magazines in these schools is quite strong, especially compared with the same publications in rural and small-town areas.

RQ2: Compared with the nation's schools overall, to what extent are other media found in inner-city high schools? These media include radio, television, online publications, and yearbooks.

Radio is offered in 10.4 percent of the inner-city schools whereas it's available in 7.7 percent of the large-city suburban schools and only 5.6 percent of the rural and small-town schools (X^2=9.9, df=2, p<.01). Radio is more commonly found in the inner city than in either large suburban schools or in rural and small-town areas.

Television is more dominant in large city suburban schools (39.7 percent) than it is in the inner city schools (31.2 percent) or in rural and small-town schools (29.6 percent). In this comparison, the inner city schools are about on par with the overall average of 31.7 percent of schools having television as a journalistic outlet (X^2=13.99, df=2, p<.001).

Online journalistic activity involving publications is most often found in rural and small-town schools (13.3 percent) compared with inner-city and suburban schools (11.4 percent each). This is not a statistically significant difference.

Yearbooks are less likely to exist in the inner-city schools (90.9 percent) than in suburban schools of large cities (93.9 percent) or in rural and small-town schools (93 percent). However, the difference is not statistically significant.

Similar to newspapers and news magazines, we see a relatively strong journalistic media presence in the inner-city high schools of this country when it comes to radio, television, online publications and yearbooks. In no comparison are they significantly lower than the norm, and in the case of radio, they are significantly higher.

RQ3: What are demographic and psychographic comparisons between media educators in inner-city high schools and those nationally (e.g., relationship with local media professionals, gender, race, areas of certification, degrees, freedom of advising, and professional participation in things like workshops)?

Inner-city schools don't have nearly the close associations with local newspapers that either rural and small-town schools do (34.6 percent) or that suburban schools do

(16.5 percent). Only 12.8 percent of the inner-city school educators claim that they have a connection with the local daily paper, especially for help with printing. These differences are statistically significant ($X^2=86.14$, df=4, $p<.001$).

Our review of literature led us to believe that in inner-city schools, newspapers would be published infrequently – and certainly less frequently than in other schools. Our research doesn't support that claim. While there are slight differences in publication frequency, compared with the overall situation in the country, they are not significant, as can be seen in Table 1.

TABLE 1: Frequency of Newspaper Publishing

	Weekly	Twice per Month	Every 3 weeks	Monthly	Less than Monthly
Inner-city (n=273)	2.9%	5.5%	8.1%	49.8%	33.7%
All schools (n=2,089)	3.5%	8.2%	6.7%	50.2%	31.2%

When it comes to partnerships with local TV or radio stations, educators from all school backgrounds show a relatively low participation rate. In the inner-city schools, the participation rate is 11.8 percent; in the suburban schools it's 10 percent; and in rural and small-town schools it's 13.8 percent. These differences are not statistically significant.

Dealing with issues of freedom of operation, the inner-city schools fare better than either rural and small-town schools or the suburban schools near large cities. We asked journalism educators, "How much freedom do your school administrators usually allow student media?" Combining two response items, "a great deal" and "almost complete," we find that 64.1 percent of all schools answered in the affirmative. By comparison, fully 70 percent of the inner-city school educators claim that they enjoy a great deal or almost complete freedom in their media advising, whereas 68.1 percent of the suburban schools report that much freedom. Only 61.8 percent of the rural and small-town schools report a good amount of freedom. Given that most schools in this study (n=1,367) were in this rural/small-town category, it would seem that those schools are in the most precarious situations when it comes to matters involving freedom of the press.

These findings are also surprising in that a relatively high number of parochial and private schools are found in the inner city – schools that, strictly speaking, are not bound by First Amendment considerations.

In Table 2, we examine the makeup of schools in our study. Note that a little more than 70 percent of the inner-city schools are public; more than 86 percent of the non-inner-city schools are public.

TABLE 2: Type of School

	Public	Parochial	Private
Inner-City (n=298)	71.5%	14.4%	14.1%
All High Schools (n=2,089)	86.4%	7.7%	5.9%

Teachers in all the schools seem to be well-educated, with nearly half of them having earned master's degrees. No appreciable differences exist with regard to the highest degree earned when comparing inner-city, suburban and rural/small-town educators, as seen in Table 3.

TABLE 3: Highest Degree Earned

Educators:	Associate's	Bachelor's	Master's	Education Specialist	Doctorate
Rural/Small-town (n=1,370)	0.5%	49.1%	47.4%	1.7%	1.3%
Suburban (n=371)	0.0%	38.5%	56.6%	1.9%	3.0%
Inner-City (n=294)	1.0%	41.5%	52.4%	1.7%	3.4%

Inner-city journalism educators are slightly more likely to be certified by their states to teach journalism compared with overall totals of teachers in the study. While 33.6 percent of the inner-city teachers hold journalism certification, only 31.6 percent of the overall teachers in the study hold that certification. This is about the same percentage as found in other national studies done in the 1990s.[34] Such a low number of journalism-certified teachers has been a perplexing and enduring problem in the world of journalism education since the beginnings of high school journalism – and points out the need for continuing education, workshops and other formal educational means for the acquisition of proper credentials. Most inner-city journalism teachers hold certification in English. Other areas of licensing may be seen in Table 4.

TABLE 4: Areas of Teacher Certification

Teachers:	English	Journalism	Social Science	Speech/Drama
Inner-City (n=273)	75.5%	33.6%	16.8%	12.1%
Overall (n=2,089)	79.6%	31.6%	17.5%	15.2%

In inner-city schools, we find a higher percentage of male teachers, 33.2 percent, compared with 29.4 percent male teachers in the overall high school population.

Similarly, we find double the percentage of minority teachers, 16.6 percent, in inner-city schools than we find in the overall population of teachers (8.2%). Table 5 shows the racial/ethnic breakdown of those teachers in inner-city schools compared with the overall population of teachers.

TABLE 5: Racial Backgrounds of Teachers

	African American	Asian American	Caucasian	Hispanic	Native American	Other Race
Inner-city (n=296)	7.8%	1.0%	83.4%	4.7%	0.7%	2.0%
Overall (n=2,089)	2.6%	0.9%	91.8%	1.7%	1.4%	1.4%

Educators in inner-city high schools are more likely to have attended a summer journalism workshop than the overall population of teachers (48.1 percent compared with 43.8 percent). Similarly, more inner-city teachers (65.7 percent) compared with the overall population (63.2 percent) have indicated that they would like to attend a journalism workshop at some time in the future. However, only 31.7 percent of the inner-city teachers, compared with 39.7% of the overall population of teachers, indicate that they would be willing to pay for such a workshop.

Summary and Conclusions

Inner-city schools are characterized by large minority populations. In the present study, nearly 300 of 2,089 schools were classified as being in the inner city, and of these, 54 percent had minority populations of 50 percent or more, and 73 percent had minority populations of 35 percent or more.

Inner-city high school newspapers and news magazines are in relatively good shape in terms of numbers and frequency of publication, at least compared with print media in the overall population of schools nationally. The same is true for other media like radio, TV, online publications and yearbooks.

Unlike their suburban and rural/small-town counterparts, inner-city schools do not enjoy as good a cooperative working relationship with local newspapers. No doubt this is an area that is a cause for concern, and it is something the newspaper industry should note. Similarly, there are not many cooperative ventures between all the schools in the study and local radio and TV stations.

In terms of freedom of the press, we find that inner-city schools enjoy a freer atmosphere in which to publish and broadcast. The problem is most acute in rural and small-town schools, but even there, more than 60 percent claim to function in relative freedom.

Inner-city teachers are as well-educated as the overall population of teachers, with more than 50 percent having earned master's degrees. Also, there tend to be more male teachers at inner-city high schools when compared with the overall school population.

We find many more parochial and private schools in the inner city than in suburbs or rural/small-town area, and future research might examine public schools only.

Endnotes

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[2] Arnold. page 3.
[3] Arnold, page 7.
[4] Arnold, page 12.
[5] Arnold, page 15.
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Scholastic
Journ

Running head: How Yearbook Journalists Covered a National Tragedy

September 11, 2001:
How Yearbook Journalists Covered a National Tragedy

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Abstract

This paper presents a review of the methods used by twenty-two junior high, middle school and high school yearbook staffs in their yearbook coverage of the terrorists attacks on the World Trade Center in New York on September 11, 2001. It also contains a content analysis of the types of stories, secondary packages and photos included and the total percent of coverage in 107 junior high, middle school and high school yearbooks. By combining these two research methods, authors of this study compared the amount of space devoted to the coverage in these yearbooks. They also studied the various means used by students and teachers in planning these story packages and in actually covering the events, in order to find specific themes among schools included in this study. Recent teaching techniques in preparing students to cover tragedy and crisis situations were considered as the staffs' approaches of including a national tragedy in their yearbooks were analyzed.

September 11, 2001:

How Yearbook Journalists Covered a National Tragedy

Introduction

Before September 11, 2001, junior high, middle school and high school yearbook students were covering tragedies. They wrote about the deaths of fellow students, natural disasters including tornadoes, hurricanes, earthquakes and fires, and some dealt with the results of terrorist activity such as the 1995 bombing of the Murrah Building in Oklahoma City. But after September 11, 2001, when the World Trade Center was destroyed by international terrorists, the student journalists, along with all other journalists, faced the job of covering the largest terrorist attack on American soil. How to incorporate a disaster of this magnitude within the scope of their yearbook pages was the problem on the minds of many yearbook advisers and students in their classrooms following September 11. It is also the focus of this research.

In recent years, covering disaster has become a topic of concern to journalism educators. Scholastic journalism experts often address the topic at state, regional and national conferences. Preparing to cover sensitive issues is a lesson advisers must teach in order to have thorough, accurate and informative content in student publications. It is imperative that important events be covered, but the way in which the students handle the coverage can make or break the published content. It is the responsibility of the advisers to help students become aware of how to handle sensitive issues in a mature manner (Boyle 1988). Once a disaster occurs, the question, "Are methods of disaster coverage being implemented in the actual coverage of the event?" must be addressed.

Because a yearbook is the story of the students' year put into photos and words, it is clear that an event with as many far-reaching impacts as the September 11 terrorist attacks would find a place in the majority of scholastic publications. But due to the high emotion involved in the aftermath of the attack, a need arises for demonstrating and teaching objectivity and practical and responsible journalism in a highly emotional time. Possible problems include being objective in the face of personal reaction to life-changing events, as well as modifying reactions and perceptions after exposure to other news coverage of the event (Irby 1988).

Review of the Literature

A simple way to deal with covering a disaster or tragedy in a yearbook is to look at how previous disasters or tragedies were covered. This makes sense when the tragedy is the death of a student or the disaster is a destructive tornado. These are events that have happened before, and in most cases, fairly recently. Staff members can consult previous publications and base current decisions on decisions that worked well in the past. However, it is difficult to compare 9/11 to anything. There is not much similar coverage to be found in scholastic publications. But, as with other sensitive topics it was important to not let the event become the focus of the entire yearbook. It is human to over-dramatize, especially when emotions run high, but no single event should overshadow the rest of the year.

Having a plan when disaster strikes is important to any team, including scholastic journalism classes. While the following tips, taken from an article by Bradley Wilson (2000) were organized with a local disaster in mind, they can be extended to a national disaster, such as 9/11. Regrouping is the first step.

"No matter how well you've planned ahead to use a 'disaster plan,' you'll never be completely ready for what has happened," Wilson said.

Creating a crisis team follows. Staff members will need to be assigned specific tasks so appropriate coverage can be coordinated. As the coverage is planned and executed, it is recommended that staffs and advisers keep administration informed and that faculty is aware of the task at hand so they can anticipate the special coverage goals and needs (Wilson 2000).

Oklahoma journalism teachers had to consider their students' needs and guide them through the emotional time after the Murrah Building bombing. In an article by Laura Schaub (1995), Carole Heitz, the adviser at Edmond Memorial High School, Edmond, OK, said that at first, her students said they couldn't talk to anyone about it because, "it was just too hard. Then they realized their personal connections and decided that there were stories about other students helping. I was incredibly impressed with the way they came through this" (Schaub 1995).

One important theme of Schaub's article was that the teachers encourage the students to work on the stories and still be sensitive to the issue.

Sharon Shobert, newspaper adviser at Highland West Junior High, Oklahoma City, OK, sent her reporters to interview students who had been affected .

"I told them not to push it if they didn't want to talk. The kids did the interviews in the counselors' offices so that students would have that support if they needed it," Shobert said (Schuab 1995).

Professionalism is a term sometimes practiced and sometimes questioned in the field of journalism. As topics become more serious in junior high and high school publications, the question of what is professional and acceptable becomes an issue with student journalists. In situations such as the 1999 Columbine High School shootings where the professional media was often described as "frenzied," advisers must help students decide how to cover a tragedy so close to themselves and to be professional about that coverage. University of Colorado students worked on the Columbine story along with professional journalists. Kevin Moloney, a journalism professor at the University of Colorado offered advice about the sensitive nature of the event.

"Much of the time we have the responsibility to expose the guilty with all our voracious investigative talents. But we also have the responsibility to treat the innocent fairly and with careful, respectful consideration. Let's guard our professionalism. Know where that line falls," Moloney said (Litherland 2000).

But closest of all the journalists to the Columbine story were the student journalists. J.J. Babb was the editor of the school paper, *Highlighter*, when the shootings occurred. According to Babb, covering the tragedy brought the staff together and helped center the school on the event. "The special edition we published helped to relieve some of the tension and put the students on common ground," Babb said (Babb 2000).

9/11 was an event that tested many aspects of American life. It tested Terry Nelson, Muncie Central High School, Muncie, IN, a journalism teacher who was in her classroom with her students, watching the terrorist attacks on television. In a 2002 article, Nelson described the differences in how students from several schools were allowed and/or encouraged to watch and gather news as 9/11 unfolded.

"The true test of journalism education remains to be seen in the ways high school newspaper departments choose to cover this subject for their student reading audience," Nelson said (Nelson 2002).

Ethical standards are practiced by professional journalists to enhance public understanding, credibility and respect, and these practices can be passed from the journalism educator to the journalism student to be used in the same manner (D'Angelo and Eveslage 1994). The tragedies and disasters before 9/11 have been at the heart of many yearbook publications. In extreme cases, student journalists are called to take on more responsibility and professionalism than previously required. The adviser of the *Pony Express* at Thurston High School, Springfield, OR, had to rely on his staff to be mature and responsible after a teenage gunman entered the hallways and cafeteria of the school and shot twenty students. Even though they were grieving, the staff had to act quickly. There was no time for constant supervision.

"There were ethical decisions being made in writing every story, but the editorial board did not have time to sit and deliberate over every issue. Instead, we trusted our writers, who showed a lot of responsibility by writing highly ethical, mature stories that were appreciated by the entire community," said front-page editor, Max Barker (Smith 1999).

Methods

The yearbooks for this study were obtained through the Oklahoma Interscholastic Press Association's (OIPA) executive director, who receives hundreds of yearbooks each year for competition from all regions of the United States. One hundred seven junior high, middle school and high school yearbooks from the 2001-2002 school year were reviewed page by page in order to determine the amount of coverage concerning the September 11 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center (to be referred to hereafter as 9/11). The amount of 9/11 coverage, including photos, captions, stories and graphic images, was counted and recorded. The number of 9/11 related items was divided by the number of pages in the yearbook and a percent of 9/11 coverage was established for each book. The books were then ranked from highest percentage to lowest percentage and divided into three categories of high, middle and low coverage. High coverage consisted of 22.41 percent to 2.84 percent. Medium coverage included 2.78 percent to 1.63 percent and low coverage included 1.56 percent to zero percent. It should be noted that the 22.41 percent was a high-range outlying number and that the next highest percent was 8.33.

Advisers from the schools were then contacted by phone and email and asked to participate in an email survey consisting of the following twelve questions:

1. Prior to 9/11, did you discuss with your staff how to cover disaster? If yes, please explain your approach.

2. After 9/11, did you discuss with your staff how to cover this particular disaster? Please explain.

3. After 9/11, describe how your staff went about planning coverage and actually covering post 9/11 events for the yearbook.

4. How did the students use local perspective in their coverage of post- 9/11 events?

5. How did members of your staff react to covering post-9/11-related events (blood drives, fundraisers, etc.)?

6. What unexpected events/situations (if any) occurred in your yearbook coverage due to 9/11?

7. Was the theme of your yearbook changed/affected by 9/11? Please explain.

8. Was there opposition/encouragement from school administration to cover or not cover post-9/11 related events? Please explain.

9. How did you help your students stay objective when covering 9/11-related stories?
10. How did your students deal with emotions when covering 9/11-related stories?
11. How did you obtain visual images (other than localizing the coverage) of 9/11?
12. Were there other disasters/tragedies in your region/state that were covered in your yearbook? If so, how did that coverage compare to 9/11 coverage?

Twenty-two surveys were obtained. The surveys were grouped into the same initial categories of high, middle and low percent of 9/11 coverage so the data recorded from the responses could be compared within and among these three groups.

Student Journalists as Practicing Journalists

In the wake of 9/11 when journalism students were given the opportunity and encouraged to do so, they became real journalists. The surveys from the advisers described numerous acts of ethical decision-making, professional behavior and responsible journalism. In her response to the email survey, Mary Ann Barton, Eureka High School, Eureka, MO, said that she and her staff looked at local and national newspaper and magazine coverage and discussed what was, "emotional, inflammatory or appropriate." She said it was deemed important by her staff that the information they were seeking was not portrayed in an over-emotional way. "We wanted to allow the facts to speak for themselves," Barton said. Also reflective of this staff's professionalism was that all photos, even some of ground zero, were taken by students.

Another school, Loudoun Valley High School, Purcellville, VA, handled the photography in a different and yet equally impressive way. This staff used photos taken at the school the day of the tragedy. "We looked for photos that emphasized the patriotism or other feelings students spoke of in interviews. We chose not to purchase or download available photos because we knew magazines, papers and eventually books would be filled with these more universal images," said adviser Martha Akers.

The staff at Brink Junior High School, Oklahoma City, OK, listened to adviser Margie Watters' advice. "I encouraged my staffers to discuss all angles and gather facts before planning their stories. We stressed objectivity and following the facts." The staff decided that a small insert, devoted solely to 9/11 coverage, would allow for more flexibility than rearranging already finished layouts. The staff watched CNN and discussed format before planning their coverage. "By waiting several days, it helped us to gather more facts and be more objective," Watters said.

Adviser Cathryn Parks of Sabino High School, Tucson, AZ, was impressed with her staff's ability to continue finding events and situations to cover concerning the effects of 9/11 without being prompted or instructed to do so. "I didn't expect them to (continually) think of yearbook coverage, but their journalistic hearts came through. Over and over they had followed through on getting something to help our coverage. I thought they would be too upset, but they worked through that," Parks said.

The yearbook staff of Muncie Central High School, Muncie IN, showed great initiative in their methods of coverage, according to adviser Terry Nelson. "During 9/11, my students covered every single avenue while it was happening," Nelson said.

The students emailed other students and acquaintances around the world to get an international perspective. They found students and faculty who had relatives in the New York area and began contacting them for first-hand information. Staffers emailed students in New York, attended city meetings and monitored the national news stations.

"They just kept collecting all of the information and first-hand accounts that they could and later we sorted out what would be of most local interest and impact to the student audience," Nelson said.

Dealing with the students' emotions was part of every adviser's job as the yearbook staffs coordinated just how to cover the 9/11 aftermath. However, in many cases, the opportunity to participate on the journalistic side of the disaster proved to be a positive experience. The staff of Bryant High School, Bryant, AR, began keeping a list after 9/11 of all the community and school events that happened because of the terrorist attacks. The staff planned extensively how to cover the event and how to make sure the coverage was accurate and adequate. "Being involved in the production of the yearbook helped the students deal with the event, helped them cope," said adviser Margaret Sorrows.

Publications' Methods of Coverage

While keeping the survey results separated into the high, middle and low categories allowed answers in those categories to be compared, it also allowed for uniformity to be discovered among the groups. As would be expected in a junior high or high school yearbook, 9/11 and the effects of 9/11 were localized and portrayed in a way that was important to and reflective of each school and community. This method of localizing the coverage was consistent in the vast majority of collected surveys.

What differed in the schools was the way they went about localizing the coverage and how the final theme of the effects of 9/11 was depicted in the books. Staffs approached the content of their books in several ways, reflective of 9/11 on:

- just a national level
- a national and local level
- just a local level

Within these three categories, coverage could de divided further into a more positive based coverage or a more realistic (tragic) based coverage,

For example, some chose to use only what they deemed to be positive photos. This meant no photos were included of the destruction of the World Trade Center or the trauma of those directly affected. Instead, photos of blood drives, students praying and patriotic displays were used. In these cases, if a picture of the World Trade Center were included, it was taken before 9/11. Eisenhower High School, Lawton, OK, was one such case. The staff wanted to use only pre-9/11 photos, according to adviser Brandi Robertson, "because there was a great deal of tension in the town (a military town) afterward and they (the staff) didn't want to make it worse by using graphic pictures."

Another way staffs focused on the positive outcomes following 9/11 was to hone in on efforts made by students in their schools. A student from Kenneth Cooper Middle School, Oklahoma City, OK, organized a citywide garage sale to help the victims of 9/11. This was the kind of coverage that made it into the Kenneth Cooper yearbook. "We (the staff) had discussed what had been done with the Oklahoma City Federal Building coverage several years ago. Being a middle school, we try to focus on helping rather than the details of the actual disaster," said adviser Gayle Morris.

The staff and adviser at Arrowhead Christian Academy, Redlands, CA, decided that information about the actual 9/11 event would be readily available in vast other media outlets, so the coverage in the yearbook would remain local and personal. Pictures from New York were not included in the content. "Instead our pictures are of how we perceived and covered the issue here," adviser Crystal Kazmierski said.

The staff at Horizon High School, Scottsdale, AZ, used a similar approach. The staff decided that covering the actual event would not be something they did in the yearbook. They, too, covered only the reactions to 9/11 and how the event impacted daily life and emotion by dealing with what was happening on their campus with their students and teachers. "The editors decided to take an approach of how the tragedy had brought patriotism to life on our campus," said adviser Lisa Baker.

The staff of Putnam City West High School, Oklahoma City, OK, incorporated the most 9/11 coverage of the yearbooks examined. According to adviser Linda Ralls, the entire book was based on the event. The theme the staff had originally selected was changed to a patriotic theme and the American flag was present on nearly every page of the book. This more encompassing approach to 9/11 coverage was different from most of the other books studied. While some staffs were concerned with negative connotations of 9/11 dominating the rest of the school year's events, the Putnam City West staff decided that the vast effects of the event could not be ignored. Incorporating so much 9/11-related coverage into their book was not seen as a negative move. As was the case in many central Oklahoma schools, the students and adviser had dealt with the bombing of the Murrah Building in downtown Oklahoma City and the May 3, 1999, tornadoes. Because of those events in recent years (while many high school staffers were participating in junior high publications), the staff had talked about disaster coverage before 9/11.

"Since the Murrah Building bombing, we have felt the need to discuss disaster coverage, at least briefly," said Ralls. "I think these kids learned how to impose distance with the Murrah Building bombing, then with the May 3 tornadoes. I was amazed by their abilities to cope."

At Broken Arrow Senior High School, Broken Arrow, OK, the yearbook adviser, Cindy Camp, wanted her students to "bring the disaster home and find out if anyone was directly affected by the tragedy." Student reaction was also important and the staff also discussed how the world had been shifted and changed by the event. In order to portray 9/11 to the impact they felt, the staff used "powerful" images, including "after" pictures of the World Trade Center. They featured a story about a student whose uncle was killed in one of the towers.

In similar style, the staff of Eisenhower High School, Lawton, OK, found out that several students had parents at the Pentagon during the attacks. These students were contacted and interviewed. While the staff was encouraged to bring the coverage to a local level, it was important to them that the national impact be recognized as well. "We dedicated two pages of what would normally be world news solely to 9/11 coverage," said adviser Brandi Robertson.

The staff of Casa Roble High School, Orangeville, CA, talked extensively about their 9/11 before they began coverage and decided that 9/11 should not anchor the book. "By distribution time it would be an event that was only part of the year we covered," said adviser Dan Austin. However, a combination of local and national coverage was used by the staff as they collected both first-hand accounts from people who had lost family and friends, as well as local fire department contributions and Islamic students in the school dealing with, "back-lash."

Conclusion

Whether the 9/11 yearbook coverage was national, local or a combination of the two, what is clear through the advisers' surveys is that in the majority of cases, the students responded maturely to the task of covering a national tragedy with fervor, even as they worked through their emotions. Encouraged by their teachers, students surpassed the everyday demands of putting together the story of the school year and stepped up to the new demands of including a life-altering event within the scope of their yearbook pages. In other words, these students became real, practicing journalists.

What is also clear is that the three categories of low, medium and high coverage did not translate to good, better and best coverage. The percent of coverage was related to decisions made by advisers and their staffs in the early planning stages of 9/11 coverage. Positive aspects resulting from 9/11 were found in every publication that responded to the survey and an enthusiasm to cover these events was found as well, even in those schools which chose to include pictures and stories that centered on the tragedy of 9/11.

Suggestions for Future Research

Participating on a yearbook staff is only one part of the possible scholastic journalism experience. Junior high, middle school and high school newspapers, magazines and broadcasting classes were also dealing with challenging issues while covering the events of 9/11. College and university publications and production staffs are another valuable source of information when dealing with disaster coverage. A comparative or group study including yearbook staffs, school newspapers and magazines and broadcasting classes would allow a more thorough investigation of scholastic coverage of tragedy and disaster, whether or not it be limited to the events of September 11, 2001.

Due to the small percentage of schools that responded to the survey questions, the role of geography in 9/11 coverage could not be explored fully. The geographical implications of 9/11 coverage in scholastic publications could be studied, not only in regards to New York City schools compared to other schools, but also by breaking down coverage content and themes in different regions of the United States and comparing them to one another. Along this same suggestion, schools in areas/regions that have dealt with high profile terrorism (like the Murrah Building bombing in Oklahoma City) could be compared with New York City schools.

Also to be considered are the far-reaching consequences of 9/11. Events continue to unfold, such as the War on Terrorism and Operation Iraqi Freedom, which provide student publications with continuing stories related in some way back to 9/11. The threat and fear of terrorism after 9/11 and how secondary publications are dealing with it (the students and the teachers) is an area of potentially immense resources in scholastic journalism research.

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The Communication Needs and Behavior of Iowa Apple Growers and Apple Cider Producers

Iowa has a small population of apple growers, and an even smaller group of cider producers. Most apple and cider producers in Iowa are considered small producers when compared to industry leaders such as the states of Washington and Michigan. Economies of scale, natural threats to crops and costs from the requirement of a warning label for unpasteurized cider present Iowa farmers with serious threats to profitability (Erb, 2000).

Meanwhile, the U.S Food and Drug Administration has implemented new regulations for manufacturing of juices and apple cider as a result of public concern over the safety of apples and fresh cider stemming from serious illness outbreaks caused by E. coli 0157:H7 contamination. The FDA's new regulation requires producers to achieve a 100,000-fold reduction of the most resistant pathogen in their finished products but does not regulate how to achieve this reduction as juice processors could choose between pasteurization and alternative technologies such as UV irradiation (Reitmeier, Glatz, Gleason, Boylston, Briggs, Jensen, Mendonca, and Wilson, 1999).

Iowa State University scientists from food science, microbiology, plant pathology, agricultural and biosystems engineering, and economics have created an integrated research project designed to study the safety, quality, and sustainability of small-farm production of apples and cider. As results from this research project become available, it will be essential to communicate such findings to producers of apples and cider so they can make decisions that ensure safe and high-quality products. Up to date information about industry regulations and practices is essential to sustain this struggling local industry.

For this small industry to survive, Iowa's apple and cider producers must have open lines of communication (1) with the scientific community that works on their behalf, (2) among themselves for practical advice, and (3) with consumers and food retailers. Therefore, an assessment of the communication needs of Iowa's apple and cider producers is necessary. The purpose of this study is to evaluate their current communication practices so recommendations can be made to strengthen their communication links with different groups.

Specifically, this study asks three questions: (1) How do producers use media to distribute and acquire information? (2) Is there a third-person effect on the producers' perceptions of the public's level of worry about food safety? and (3) Who and what communication sources do apple and cider producers trust?

An understanding of the communication needs and behaviors of Iowa's apple and cider producers is an essential part of solving some of this industry's major problems. But there are other groups that would also benefit from improved communication in this industry. To compete with the industry giants such as Michigan and Washington, small apple growers and cider producers from other states could potentially use what is learned from this study to improve their production practices. In addition, research and outreach institutions can use the results to communicate more effectively with this and other small-grower industries within their state through agricultural extension programs. Finally, consumers of apples and apple cider will also benefit, as they will better understand their food choices. Stable communication networks in the apple and cider industries should ultimately lead to safer, higher-quality products for the consumer.

Theoretical Framework and Literature Review

The Communication Behaviors of Apple Growers and Cider Producers

As with most people engaged in farming, Iowa's apple and cider producers have an abundant supply of information. An exploratory survey of their communication sources indicated that they have access to and use a variety of media (Rodriguez & Zehr, 2002). To provide a framework, study reviewed and compared the results of three other studies of agricultural media use.

Previous studies of Iowa farmers' use of agricultural information sources suggest that television use is strictly a form of entertainment (McNeil-Sanders, 1991; Jo, 1999). These findings differ with national responses from the National Association of Farm Broadcasters Who found 59 percent of the respondents to their survey indicated they had watched television for farm information (NAFB, 1999).

McNeil-Sanders (1991) found radio to be one of the most important sources of agricultural information to Iowa farmers. Again, Jo's study (1999) found similar results. The NAFB (1991) survey also indicated the importance of radio to farmers nationwide.

The previous studies found newspapers to be of great importance to Iowa farmers and citizens. In McNeil-Sanders' (1991) study of Iowa farmers', newspapers were also utilized frequently. Jo (1999) found newspapers to be the most important source of environmental information among Iowans. The National Association of Farm Broadcasters did not present survey questions about newspaper use.

McNeil-Sanders' (1991) found 29 percent of responding farmers read farm magazines "very often," while another 45 percent reported reading them "often." These results may have been skewed as the sample was drawn from a list of subscribers to *Wallace's Farmer*. Jo (1999) found magazines to be important also, as 10 percent of the respondents preferred magazines to other media. The NAFB (1999) found that 77 percent of the respondents indicated reading at least one of these publications in the last 30 days.

Because online information sources are relatively new, it is understandable that this medium is progressing through the early stages of adoption. It may be for this reason that in McNeil-Sanders' survey (1991), 84 percent of the farmers indicated that they did not own a computer. NAFB's (1999) survey indicated that only 46 percent of the farmers surveyed had computers but only 16 percent of the survey respondents reported using farm-related web sites. Jo's (1999) study did not address computer use as a source of environmental information.

Considering the vast array of information sources available, this study asks:

RQ1: Where do Iowa cider and apple producers get information about food safety?

The Third-Person Effect in Communication

Iowa apple and cider producers spend considerable amounts of time doing "market research" by talking with their customers at such locations as farmers markets because assumptions about the most pressing issues involved in their enterprise are made based on what they think their customers or target product users think about these same issues. With the introduction of new technologies and industry practices comes controversy. A person's conception of controversial subjects and how he/she perceives the media's influence on how others look at such controversial topics illustrates what is known as the third-person effects phenomenon.

Davison introduced the third-person effects hypothesis as one that "predicts that people will tend to overestimate the influence that mass communication have on the attitudes and behavior of others" (Davison, 1983, p. 3). When a topic or issue is one of considerable controversy, Davison also suggests that people have a tendency to perceive the media as being biased toward the opposing viewpoint. He hypothesized that the combination of this perceived media bias and the third-person effect would result in a misinterpretation of the "other" person's attitudes (1983:11).

Salwen (1999) pointed out distinction between a third-person perceptual and third-person behavioral hypothesis. According to Salwen, " The third-person perceptual hypothesis predicts that media messages will have greater effects on other people than on themselves. A behavioral hypothesis predicts that third-person perception will predict support for restrictions on media messages." The perceptual hypothesis is the focus of this study.

Iowa's apple and cider industries have their own collection of controversial topics. Irradiating food to eliminate harmful pathogens is one. Research efforts are underway to determine whether or not irradiating apple cider would be effective and economically viable. Unquestionably, cider producers will decide to adopt or reject this technology based on their attitudes about the technology. These attitudes will be heavily influenced by their perceptions of consumer attitudes about the practice. If the cider producer thinks that irradiation is a worthwhile technology but perceives that messages opposing irradiation will adversely influence the consumer, the decision to adopt this expensive new technology is made more difficult.

In a review of third-person research, Perloff (1993) divided previous studies into several conditions that facilitate the third-person effect: message topic, ego involvement, perceived source bias, and social distance. Message topic studies focus on messages with negative outcomes, such as defamatory news advertisements, pornography, or negative political ads. Such negative messages, according to Perloff and first suggested by Gunther and Thorson (1992), will create a more significant third-person effect, while messages with more desirable effects will not. In their meta-analysis, Paul, Salwen, and Dupagne (2000) found message topic to be the only non-methodological that was a significant predictor for third-person effect in 32 studies.

Perloff (1993) also illustrates the impact of ego-involvement on the third-person hypothesis. Gunther (1988) supports this position, saying that people who are highly involved in an issue are less likely to change opinions about the issue. Iowa apple and cider producers may be conceived as being very highly involved in issues that concern their livelihood. Their high-involvement may produce a greater third-person effect.

A third condition that enhances the third-person effect is perceived source bias. Perloff (1993) notes that studies have shown that the third-person effect is more significant when a person perceives a message to be negatively biased or when the audience realizes the persuasive intent of the source. Perloff suggests that because of ego-involvement, a person is more likely to perceive a source bias. If a source were to link E. coli contamination to Iowa apple cider, a cider producer would perceive such a source to be biased, contributing to the third-person effect.

A fourth facilitator of the third-person effect, according to Perloff (1993), is social distance. Perloff cites three studies that found perceived differences between communication effects on others and the self increased as the definition of "others" is explained in more broad terms. Duck, Hogg, and Terry (1998), found third-person effects to be more pronounced for interpersonally dissimilar others. For examplein the three studies of agricultural and environmental information source use previously cited, the samples studied ranged from very specific (McNeil-Sanders' study of Iowa farmers) to less specific (Jo's study of Iowa citizens) to more general (NAFB's study of farmers and ranchers across the United States). According to the social distance hypothesis, producers would perceive a greater impact of communication on farmers and ranchers across the United States than on other Iowa farmers.

The controversial topics facing Iowa's apple and cider industries are so diverse that industry concerns can be applied to any of Perloff's (1993) facilitators of the third-person effect hypothesis. Research, though it has yet to pinpoint individual variables that cause it, has confirmed that in some situations, the third-person effect occurs. As such, this study asks:

RQ2: Is there a third-person effect evident on Iowa apple and cider producers' perception of the public's concern about food safety issues?

Trust and Credibility Perceptions

To understand apple growers' and cider producers' media choices and their implications on the third-person effects hypothesis, their perceptions of source credibility must be examined. Such an examination involves issues of trust, expertise and believability.

Buzby and Ready (1996) found that U.S. survey respondents reported high media use for obtaining food safety information but decreasing levels of trust in this information. This illustrates the importance of trustworthy information sources

Kiousis (2001), in a survey of credibility research, pointed out that the concept has generally been reviewed in the domains of source credibility and medium credibility. He concluded that the main overarching pattern of the research is that scholars have failed to agree on the core dimensions of the concept. Because of the variety of information sources available to Iowa producers, this study will utilize the source credibility information.

Hovland, Janis, and Kelly (1953) conducted a study suggesting that the credibility of a source depends upon the message receiver's perception of the source's expertise of the subject and his or her trustworthiness.

Although this classic study was useful to future researchers, many scholars felt it to be too simplistic. Berlo, Lemert and Mertz (1970) hypothesized that source credibility was "multidimensional." Other researchers contributing to the understanding of the multidimensionality of credibility include Andersen and Clevenger (1963), Bowers and Phillips (1967), Falcione (1974), Markham 1968), and McCroskey (1966).

Recently McGuire (2001) explained what constitutes the attributes of expertise and trustworthiness. According to McGuire (2001), "perceived source expertise derives from characteristics such as the source's general education level, familiarity with the subject matter, and speaking in an authoritative tone," (p. 24). Perceived trustworthiness, McGuire (2001) said, comes from a source's "general reputation for honesty," "being in a trustworthy profession," "not standing to profit personally from convincing the audience," and "emitting nonverbal cues that indicate honesty." Atkin (2001) reinforces the importance of perceived source expertise and trustworthiness as described by McGuire, only adding emphasis on presentation style.

Given the criteria of who or what people find credible, this study specifically asks:
RQ3: Who and what communication sources do Iowa apple and cider producers find most credible?

Methodology

The research questions and hypothesis posed in this study were tested using data gathered through a mail survey in a questionnaire. As a pretest, the questionnaire was administered to 18 apple growers and cider producers attending the 2002 Iowa Fruit and Vegetable Grower Association meeting on January 25, 2002. After minimal revisions, the same questionnaire was administered to a list of Iowa apple growers and cider producers by mail. Two mailings were performed, with the second wave sent to those who did not return a completed questionnaire during the initial mailing.

Sample Selection

The small population under study presents the researcher with some advantages. Because Iowa's apple and cider producers comprise a continually shrinking group, reliable results are obtainable from a small sample. The sample of Iowa apple growers in this study was taken from a mailing list provided by the Iowa Fruit and Vegetable Growers Association containing 169 commercial growers recognized by the state of Iowa. In addition, the sample includes a list of 27 state certified cider producers provided by the Iowa State University Food Science and Human Nutrition Department.

Questionnaire

The questionnaire was seven pages in length, consisting of four sections. The first of these sections was designed to descriptively indicate the respondents' media habits. These questions asked about exposure, frequency and attention paid to newspaper, magazine, television, radio, and on-line sources and were mostly close-ended. The respondents were asked to indicate if they did not use a medium.

If they did use a medium, respondents were asked to indicate the hours or days per week they used a medium, and choose appropriate answers from several Likert-like scale items. The second section of the questionnaire focused on producer and consumer issues using Likert scales to evaluate perceptions of various food safety technology and policy issues. The third section of the questionnaire asked respondents to evaluate the level of trust they confer upon a number of information sources and industry groups using Likert-scales. The final section of the questionnaire collected demographic information about the respondents using multiple-choice questions about race, gender, income, and education level. It was explained that this information was intended for statistical purposes only and would be kept confidential.

Variables

Communication Behavior

Communication behavior, for the purpose of this study, involves exposure to, frequency of and attention paid to each potential mediated source of production and food safety information. To measure mass media exposure, a filter question was posed: "On an average day, about how many hours of television do you watch?" The respondents could choose the answer, "Generally, I do not watch television" and skip the follow-up questions. If they did watch, they were asked to fill in the blank for "number of hours I watch television on an average day." These questions were asked about television, radio, magazine, newspaper, and on-line sources.

Following the questions about exposure, respondents were asked how often they used each medium as a source of information about food safety. Question wording varied for each medium, as each medium has its own unit of analysis. For television, respondents were asked: "When you watch television, about how often do you watch news, talk shows, or other programs about food safety?" Although wording was slightly different for each medium, in every case respondents were to choose one of these response categories: "Hardly ever," "Once in a while," "Somewhat often," "Often," and "Every day."

The next question measured attention to food safety information on each medium. Like the previous variable, question wording varied for each medium but the available answers for each medium were uniform. For example, in the newspaper section, the question was asked, "When you read a newspaper and come across articles about food safety, how closely do you read them?" Respondents were to select one of these possible answers: "No attention at all," "Very little attention," "Fair attention," "Close attention," and "As closely as I can."

Third-Person Effects on Producer and Consumer Issues

To study a possible third-person effect, this study asked Iowa apple and cider producers: "How worried are you about the following food safety technology and policy issues related to apple growing and apple cider production? On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is "not worried" and 5 is "very worried," where do you position yourself on each of these items?" The issues that respondents rated were bacteria in foods, growth hormone residues in food, genetically modified foods, pesticide residue in foods, irradiated food, naturally occurring toxins in food, antibiotic residues in food, food preparation when people eat out, and food preparation in the kitchen.

On the following page, the same issue categories were given with the same range of responses. The only thing different was the wording of the question. Respondents were asked, "How worried do you think the general public is about the following food safety technology and policy issues related to apple growing and apple cider production? On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is "not worried" and 5 is "very worried," where do you position the public on each of these items

With this collection of eighteen variables (the producers' perception of the nine issues and how they think the public perceives such issues), a third-person effect was tested for each issue as well as the collective levels of concerns for apple industry-related issues. The collective levels of producers' concern was also be calculated by adding their responses to each 1 to 5 scale of worry. The higher the score, the more concerned about apple industry-related issues the respondent will be. Similarly, the scores of their perception of the public's level of worry were added to indicate how worried the respondent perceives the public to be.

Trust of Various Food Safety Information Sources

Levels of trust were measured by asking the respondents, "About how much do you trust the following sources of food safety information? Please indicate your response on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means you do not trust the source at all and 5 means you trust it very much."

The sources provided are a collection of interpersonal, mass media, and institutional sources. The media sources include: magazines, newspapers, radio news programs, and television news programs. The interpersonal sources include family, doctor or primary health-care provider, farmers, university scientists, friends, and public health officials. The institutional sources include: the US Department of Agriculture, consumer advocacy groups, the American Medical Association, food processing corporations, health/natural food stores, supermarkets, the US Food and Drug Administration, Iowa State University, the US Environmental Protection Agency, and the American Dietetic Association.

Method of Data Analysis

This study consists of two sections that will contain descriptive analysis. The first section looks at the communication behavior of Iowa's apple and cider producers. To aid interpretation of the respondents' media behaviors, frequency distributions and analysis of means were conducted. Frequency distributions were useful to show the number of respondents who use particular media as well as aggregate mass media use trends. The mean was calculated to represent the average number of hours, days, or times the respondents use each medium, as well as attention paid to information sources.

The second descriptive section indicated the food safety information sources Iowa's apple and cider producers find credible. Again, the mean score describes how credible, on average, Iowa apple and cider producers view their information sources to be.

Finally, this study will test the third-person effect hypothesis. A paired-sample t-test was used to analyze the difference between the apple and cider producers' concerns about food safety risk issues and their perception of the general public's concern for these same issues.
A t-test is a statistical procedure used to compare two groups of mean scores (Wimmer & Dominick, 2000). A paired sample test will be used because it allows for the comparison of the mean worry scores about the same topic for the groups of data. One group of data will consist of the producers' mean worry score of a given issue. The other group will be the mean worry score

that the producers perceive the general public to have. So there will be one paired sample t-test for each issue asked about on this section of the questionnaire. Once the paired sample test is performed, a regression test was conducted to see if media use affects levels of concern.

Results

Description of the Population

One hundred and eight of the 196 apple and cider producers who received questionnaires returned them, giving a response rate of 55 percent. Seventy-two percent of the respondents were male. The mean age of the respondents was 55 years, with an age range of 20 to 83 years. The majority had spent an average of 16.6 years in the apple and/or cider industry. Twenty-eight percent indicated they had vocational or technical schooling or some college, 21 percent graduated from college, and 20 percent had post-graduate education. More than half of the respondents (64.2 percent) categorized themselves as apple growers while 35.8 percent described themselves as both an apple grower and cider producer. None claimed to be cider producers who rely exclusively on imported apples. The average combined household income for 2001 was between $25,000 and $49,999. Thirty-four percent claimed their yearly income fell within this range, while another 25 percent indicated that they made between $50,000 and $74,999 in 2001. Table (1) provides a summary of the demographic information about the respondents.

Table 1. Demographics of study sample

	Number	Percent
Age (years)		
20-30	2	2.04
31-40	9	10.2
41-50	27	27.6
51-60	28	28.6
61-70	17	17.3
71-80	11	11.2
81-90	3	3.06
Experience in Industry (years)		

0-10	35	36.5
11-20	36	37.5
21-30	15	15.6
31-40	5	5.2
41-50	3	3.1
51-60	2	2.1
Gender		
Male	78	78.8
Female	21	21.2
Race		
European American	87	80.6
Native American	3	2.8
Other	8	7.4
Type of Producer		
Apple Grower	61	64.2
Grower and Cider Producer	34	35.8
2001 Earned Income		
Less than $25000	12	13.0
$25000-$49999	37	40.2
$50000-$74999	28	30.4
$75000-$99999	8	8.7
$100000 or more	5	5.4
Do not know	2	2.2
Highest Level of Education		
Less than high school	4	4
High school graduate	20	20
Voc/tech school or some college	31	31
College graduate	23	23
Post graduate education	22	22
Acres of Land		
Less than 5	48	51.1
5 - 10	22	23.4
11-20	12	17.8
21-30	1	1.1
31-40	8	8.5
41-50	2	2.1
More than 50	1	1.1

N=108
Total number of values do not equal
108 due to non-responses

Data Analysis

Communication Behavior

Frequency of exposure was measured on a 5-point scale, with 1 meaning the respondent is "hardly ever" exposed to food safety issues on that particular medium and 5 indicating that the respondent is exposed to such messages "every day." In all but one case, respondents reported using mass media channels "once in a while" for food safety information. Figure (1) compares the producers' assessments of exposure to the various information sources. Iowa apple and cider producers indicated they are most frequently exposed to food safety messages via the television. Their mean television exposure was 2.879, meaning they are exposed to food safety messages "once in a while." Producers' newspaper exposure is at the same "once in a while" level (mean=2.505). Magazines are also a source of food safety information "once in a while" for apple and cider producers (mean=2.422), as is radio (mean=2.148). Respondents had the least amount of exposure to on-line sources, with a mean score of only 1.540. This selection means that they "hardly ever" went on-line to find food safety information.

Finally, to measure aggregate exposure to food safety information sources, responses to these questions were added to determine mean media exposure. Because the mean exposure for online sources was dramatically lower than other media sources, it was eliminated from the computation, giving a score more representative of traditional media (mean=11.410). This indicates that the producers are exposed to traditional media "somewhat often."

With ratings of exposure almost exactly in the middle of the scale, the amount of attention paid to the media increases in importance. To measure this, producers were asked to indicate how closely they pay attention to media on a scale of 1 (meaning "no attention at all") and 5 (meaning "as closely as I can").

In every case, producers indicated that they paid "fair attention" with attention means above 3. Figure (2) compares the producers' assessment of attention paid to various information sources. Magazines were given the largest amount of attention, with a rating of 3.648. Newspapers closely followed, with a rating of 3.646. Television was rated 3.596 while radio was rated at 3.591. Again, on-line sources received the least attention (mean=3.117).

The discrepancy between exposure and attention paid may have been affected by the level of trust the producer has in a particular medium as illustrated by Figure (3). The issue of trust is explored further in RQ3.

Third-Person Effects on Producer and Consumer Issues

The first step necessary to answer this question is to calculate the producers' level of worry as well as their perception of the general public's level of worry and compare the means using paired sample t-tests. A significant difference in the means of the two levels of worry is necessary to detect any third-person effect.

Apple and cider producers indicated that they were not as worried about food safety issues as they thought the general public was for all but one of the issues. There was no statistically significant difference in the producers' mean worry levels and their perception of the public's worry in the following issues: bacteria in foods (producer mean=2.937, general public mean= 3.187, p=0.101); growth hormone residues in foods (producer mean=2.712, general public mean = 2.840, p=0.408); pesticide residue in foods (producer mean= 3.333, general public=3.562, p=0.117); naturally occurring toxins in food (producer mean=2.372, general public mean= 2.500, p=0.320); antibiotic residues in food (producer mean= 2.837, general public mean= 2.869, p= 0.847); and food preparation in their home kitchen (producer mean = 2.419, general public mean= 2.559, p= 0.276).

Producers were more worried about food preparation when people eat in restaurants (mean level of worry=3.302). Interestingly, they predicted the public to be less worried about this topic than themselves (mean level of worry=3.197). This was the only instance of this reverse third person phenomenon occurring. Still, this difference was not statistically significant (t= 0.720; p= 0.471).

The producers' level of worry and their perception of the public's worry differed significantly, however, when asked about genetically modified foods. Producers felt that the buying public is more worried about genetically modified organisms (mean=3.087) than themselves (mean=2.703) (t= -2.340; p= 0.022).

The controversial topic of food irradiation elicited another significant difference between the producers' level of worry and their perception of the public's level of worry. Producers gave themselves a worry score of only 2.466 while estimating the public's level of worry about irradiated food at 2.888 (t= -2.800; p= 0.006).

Finally, to assess overall level of worry about food safety technology and policy issues related to apple growing and apple cider production, a "worry score" was computed by adding up the producers' level of worry about all of these food safety issues. Then, their estimations of the public's level of worry were also computed. Out of a possible score of 45, producers rated themselves 24.375 on the worry scale. Producers thought that the public had more food safety concerns overall, giving them a score of 26.412. The results indicate that there is a statistically significant difference in the producers' level of worry and what they perceive the public's level of worry to be (t= -2.100; p= 0.039).

Table 2. A Comparison of Producers' Worry and Perceived Public Worry

Food Safety Issue	Producers' level of worry	Producers' perception of public's level of worry	T value	Probability
Bacteria	2.937	3.187	-1.66	0.101
Hormone	2.712	2.840	-0.83	0.408
GMOs	2.703	3.087	-2.34	0.022*
Pesticides	3.333	3.562	-1.58	0.117
Irradiation	2.466	2.888	-2.80	0.006*
Natural Toxins	2.372	2.500	-1.00	0.320
Antibacteria	2.837	2.869	-0.19	0.847
Food Preparation in Restaurants	2.419	2.559	-1.10	2.760
Overall	24.375	26.412	-2.10	0.039*

* Indicates significance

Trust of Various Food Safety Information Sources

Iowa's apple and cider producers gave their family the highest trust assessment of all possible sources, with a mean score of 4.010. The family doctor, with a score of 3.687, and University scientists, with a score of 3.677, had the next highest trust assessments. All three of these are interpersonal information sources. Other interpersonal sources received favorable trust scores as well. The producers gave other farmers a 3.380 trust rating while public health officials were assessed a 3.278 rating. Friends received the lowest trust rating of the group of interpersonal information sources with 3.082. Figure (4) compares the producers' trust ratings of the various interpersonal information sources.

Iowa State University was given the highest trust assessment for an institutional source at 3.670. Besides ISU, the American Medical Association (trust rating of 3.500), the United States Department of Agriculture (3.420), the American Dietetic Association (3.327), and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (3.263) were the highest rated institutional sources of information. Figure (5) compares the producers' trust ratings of the various institutional information sources.

The trust assessments for media sources were consistently low. The producers reported trusting magazines the most with a rating of 3.092. Radio was given the next highest trust rating of 2.818. The producers' low trust level of 2.619 for newspapers was followed only by television's rating of 2.515. Figure (6) compares the producers' trust ratings of media information sources.

At an aggregate level, producers gave interpersonal information sources higher trust scores (mean=3.517). Institutional sources were trusted slightly less, with a mean score of 3.001. This figure may be slightly misleading as this category contained both government agencies and for-profit industries. The mean score for government institutions only was slightly higher at

3.330. The combination of health food stores, food processing corporations, supermarkets, and consumer advocacy groups produced a mean trust score of 2.497. Figure (7) illustrates the discrepancy between levels of trust in government or non-profit institutions and those seen to be stakeholders such as supermarkets and consumer groups. Finally, the mean score for mass media sources was 2.761. This score was the lowest of the three information source categories and only slightly more trustworthy to the producers than for-profit corporations and consumer advocacy groups. A comparison of the levels aggregate levels of trust in mass media, interpersonal, and institutional information sources is provided in Figure (8).

To uncover what variables influenced levels of trust in media, institutional, and interpersonal information sources at an aggregate level, stepwise multiple regressions were performed with demographical data such as age, gender, level of education, amount of income from apple industry, type of producer, years of experience, and the size of the farm in acres. In addition, the calculated levels of media attention and media exposure were also tested. Education was the only predictor variable found to be significant in affecting the rate of trust.

Discussion and Summary

This study examined the communication needs and behaviors of Iowa's apple and cider producers by measuring the levels of exposure and attention to mass media messages about food safety within the apple growing and cider industry of Iowa. It also examined the levels of trust that the producers had in mass media, interpersonal, and institutional sources of information. Finally, this study tested whether the use of mass media resulted in a third-person effect on the producers' perception of the general public's level of worry about food safety issues.

Communication Behavior

Not surprisingly, it was found that Iowa's apple and cider producers are frequently exposed to mass media messages about food safety on every medium except online information sources. The producers reported using magazines, newspaper, radio, and television "once in a while" but "hardly ever" use online sources to gather food safety information.

These findings, coupled with their media trust assessments provide insights on the development of a communication strategy designed to transmit information to Iowa's apple and cider producers. The evidence indicates that magazine articles about food safety should be a priority for any such campaign because of the high levels of trust in and attention to magazines

Producers indicated that they are more frequently exposed to and pay greater attention to newspapers but trust this medium less than magazine and radio news. Newspaper coverage that is less sensationalistic will certainly provide a more realistic framework for producers and consumers alike to make rational food choices. It is essential that media practitioners be in contact with credible and readily accessible spokespersons. Proactive contact with the media is the best way of presenting up-to-date information, creating trust among the producers and countering the negative impact of any food safety crisis.

Iowa's apple and cider producers trust radio as a source of food safety information but reported having the least amount of exposure and attention to food safety information from this medium. Therefore, it is difficult to envision using radio as a key source of food safety information. Limited information can be communicated via agricultural programming, there are few programs that would deliver industry specific information to apple and cider producers.

Television is the medium the producers are most frequently exposed to but trust the least. Food safety information has potential to be disseminated on agricultural or news programs, but again this medium should be reserved for food safety information of the utmost importance.

Despite low exposure levels, it is surmised that online sources of food safety information will continue to grow in importance among this target audience. The respondents report that they pay consistent attention to online sources of food safety information when it is available. As these sources become increasingly accessible they will grow in importance among the producers. Also, apple and cider producers demonstrated high trust levels for public institutions and interpersonal information sources. The ability of online platforms to present timely, relevant food safety content from these types of sources will be a great asset in any effort to communicate with this group of producers. Online platforms also have potential to facilitate interpersonal communication among a network of similar producers so that organization and cooperation can occur to strengthen the local industry as a whole.

Third-Person Effects on Producer and Consumer Issues

The demonstrated frequent exposure to mass media sources prompts a further research question: Did this level of exposure lead to a third-person effect? Likert scale responses in seven of the nine food safety issues addressed in the questionnaire did not show any evidence of this phenomenon occurring.

The two issues in which there was a significant difference in the producers' perception of their own level of worry and what they thought to be the public's level of worry are possibly the two most controversial in the list. Food irradiation and genetically modified organisms are indeed the most intensely debated of the topics in the media. As far as these two issues are concerned, producers estimated the public's level of worry about irradiation and GMOs to be significantly greater than theirs. It was also found that there is a significant difference in the producers' assessments and their perception of the general public's level of worry about food safety. The producers thought that the general public was more worried about food safety issues in general than themselves.

A third-person effect may impair the producers' abilities to effectively market their products. Therefore, information gathering and constant orientation to the business are critical aspects of a producer's life. This points to the importance of university extension and interpersonal information sources to supplement what the producers learn from media sources.

Trust of Various Food Safety Information Sources

This study found that Iowa's apple and cider producers place the greatest amount of trust on interpersonal information sources. They trust institutional information sources slightly less while generally reporting a low level of trust in the media for food safety information.

Although the respondents frequently use media for gathering information about food safety, their level of trust in the media to provide this information would suggest that communication strategists must select their media and tailor message carefully. With low levels of trust, the media cannot be relied upon exclusively to communicate the unique information apple and cider producers need.

According to the respondents, institutional sources are more trustworthy than media. Government-funded agencies such as the United States Department of Agriculture and Iowa State University are seen as authorities – and thus enjoy tremendous credibility -- in the realm food safety information. Therefore, these agencies' endorsement of food safety products and procedures are more likely to lead to the adoption of such recommended practices.

Conversely, institutions seen as being for profit (such as supermarkets) are trusted much less than government-funded or supported institutions. Also, apple and cider producers find consumer advocacy groups and the Environmental Protection Agency less trustworthy than other institutions.

The producers' most important source of food safety information comes from interpersonal contact. Therefore, to effectively transmit information to the producers, communication strategies must exploit the full potential of opinion leaders. Respondents claim they trust doctors, university scientists, other farmers, public health officials, and their friends most. If one wishes to communicate specifically with the apple and cider producers of Iowa, one must therefore facilitate interpersonal interactions with actual representatives of these institutions. University extension projects, demonstrations and clinics, panel discussions, and farm visits are examples of how information can be presented to apple and cider producers. A main advantage of interpersonal communication is that, unlike the mass media, the communicator can also collect information from producers.

Implications for Further Study

Since there is a limited number commercial apple and cider producers in Iowa, the results should reflect the perceptions and communication needs of this local industry fairly accurately. The study was available to nearly all of the state's commercial apple growers and cider producers. The findings are particularly robust because they dealt with population parameters rather than statistical inferences.

The findings cannot be generalized to industry-leading states such as Michigan and Washington where the number of producers is much greater and may possess different characteristics pertinent to apple growing and cider making. Consequently, this study precludes a comparative analysis of the communication and information needs of apple growers and cider producers of a nascent apple-producing state such as Iowa where the apple industry is far less essential to the overall state economy, and those in the industry's titan states such as Washington and Michigan.

It would have strengthened internal validity further if the communication behaviors of small, medium, and large-scale apple producers could be compared. It would have been of interest to communication strategists, for instance, to know if there is a difference in the communication requirements of those in the apple and grape industries.

Communication Behavior

The study did not ask respondents exactly what magazines or newspapers they subscribe to, what radio channels they listen to, what TV programs they watch, and what online sites they frequently log on to. Valuable information might have been gathered by analyzing such specific selections.

The findings do suggest the continuous monitoring of online access and use of online information sources. Learning more about when and how they use online information will allow for better communication using this medium.

Third-Person Effects on Producer and Consumer Issues

This study found a significant third-person effect on the producers' perceptions of consumers' worry only on issues thought to be highly controversial in the local context: food irradiation and the consumption of genetically modified foods. These may not, however, be the topics for which consumers and producers may demonstrate divergent levels of worry. In another area of the country, or even the world, these may be non-issues. For example, a primarily agricultural state such as Iowa may simply not worry about pesticide residues in foods while people from more industrialized states may find pesticides more worrisome. Additional third-person effect research might investigate the local levels of controversy surrounding these and/or other producer and consumer issues as a predictor of the strength of the third-person phenomenon.

Trust in Various Food Safety Information Sources

Additional qualitative research may be helpful in uncovering the reasons behind the differences in levels of trust in informational sources. One good example would be to determine the reasons why respondents seem to trust the Environmental Protection Agency significantly less than the others.

Conclusion

Small agricultural industries, such as the apple and cider industry in Iowa, face great challenges as ownership becomes more concentrated to the wealthiest few. Adding to this challenging competitive structure is an increased demand for safe apple cider. With more money available for product development, large apple and cider producers can afford to implement these standards and practices while the small producers must find a way to offset the rising costs in their smaller budgets.

Research institutions such as Iowa State University are working to develop affordable solutions for both large and small producers to meet the quality demands of the public. As results become available, those who can access information and put it into practice will hold a definite advantage. In this changing agricultural environment, information is a key to survival.

With the results of the media usage portions of this study, communicators may better understand how to target this specific group through the media. With the trust portions of this study, communicators may better understand how to supplement mass media communications with interpersonal interactions. Finally, the third-person effects portions of this study shows communicators how controversial food safety issues can become distorted by media messages. This points to the importance of integrated communications strategies.

As information is a key to industry survival, communication with and among Iowa apple and cider producers is essential. Perhaps the main advantage that a small, localized industry has is the potential for more efficient communication. Interpersonal ties with fellow producers and university scientists can result in the transmission of helpful advice and information pertinent to the production of a safe, high-quality product. In the budding apple and cider industry in Iowa, as with any small business, future success hinges upon the ability of this group to communicate.

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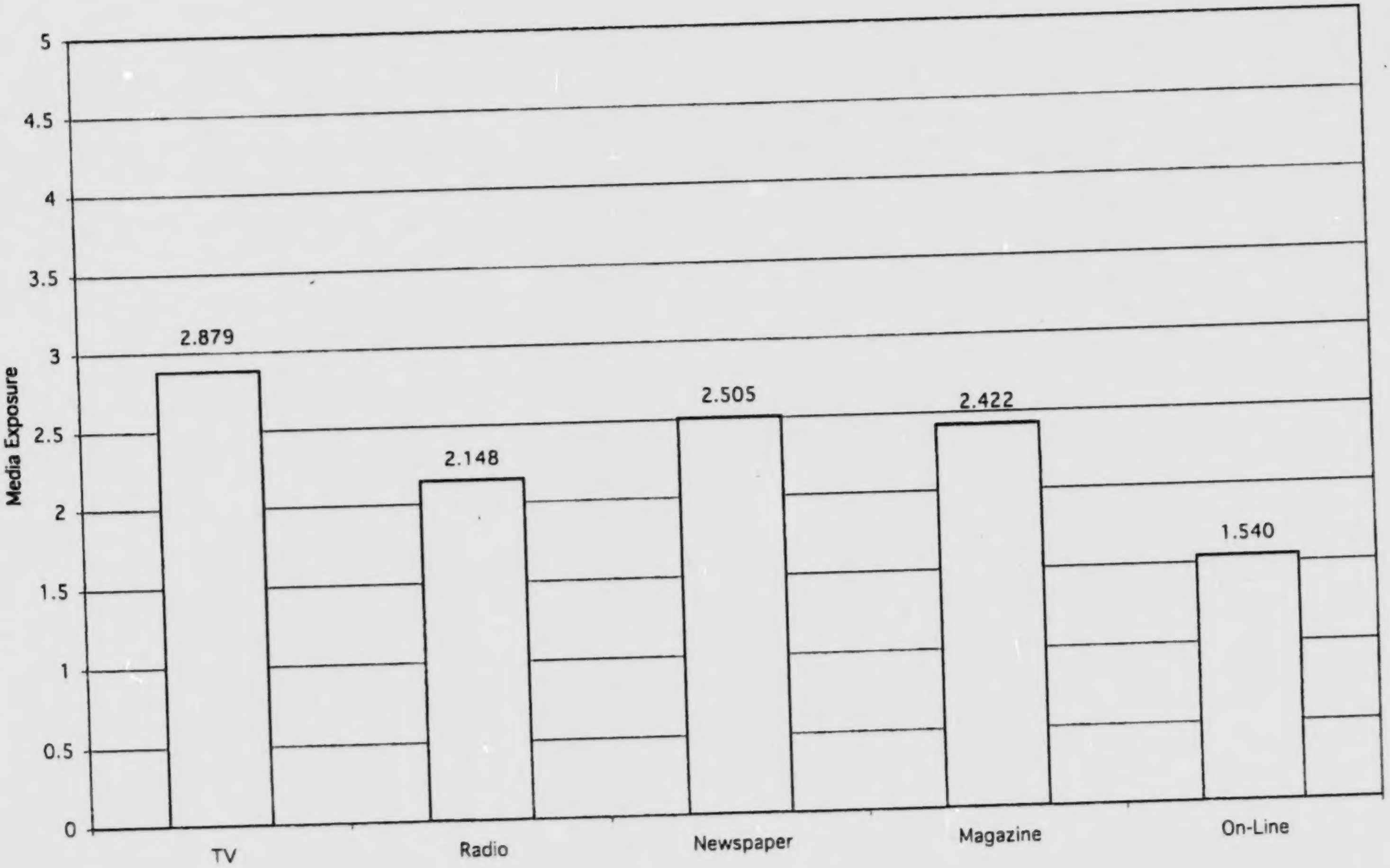

Figure 1. Producer assessment of mean media exposure

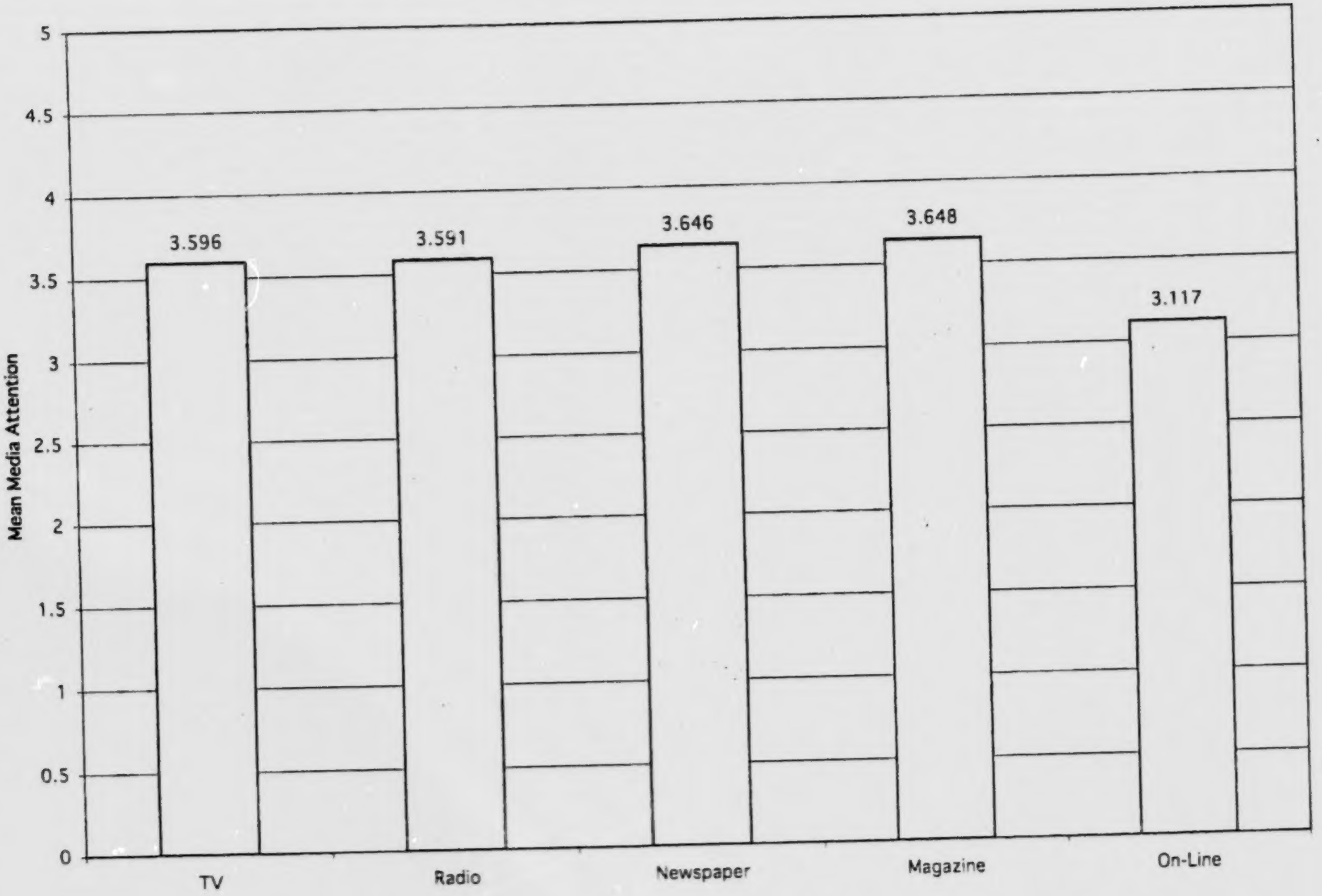

Figure 2. Producer assessment of mean media attention

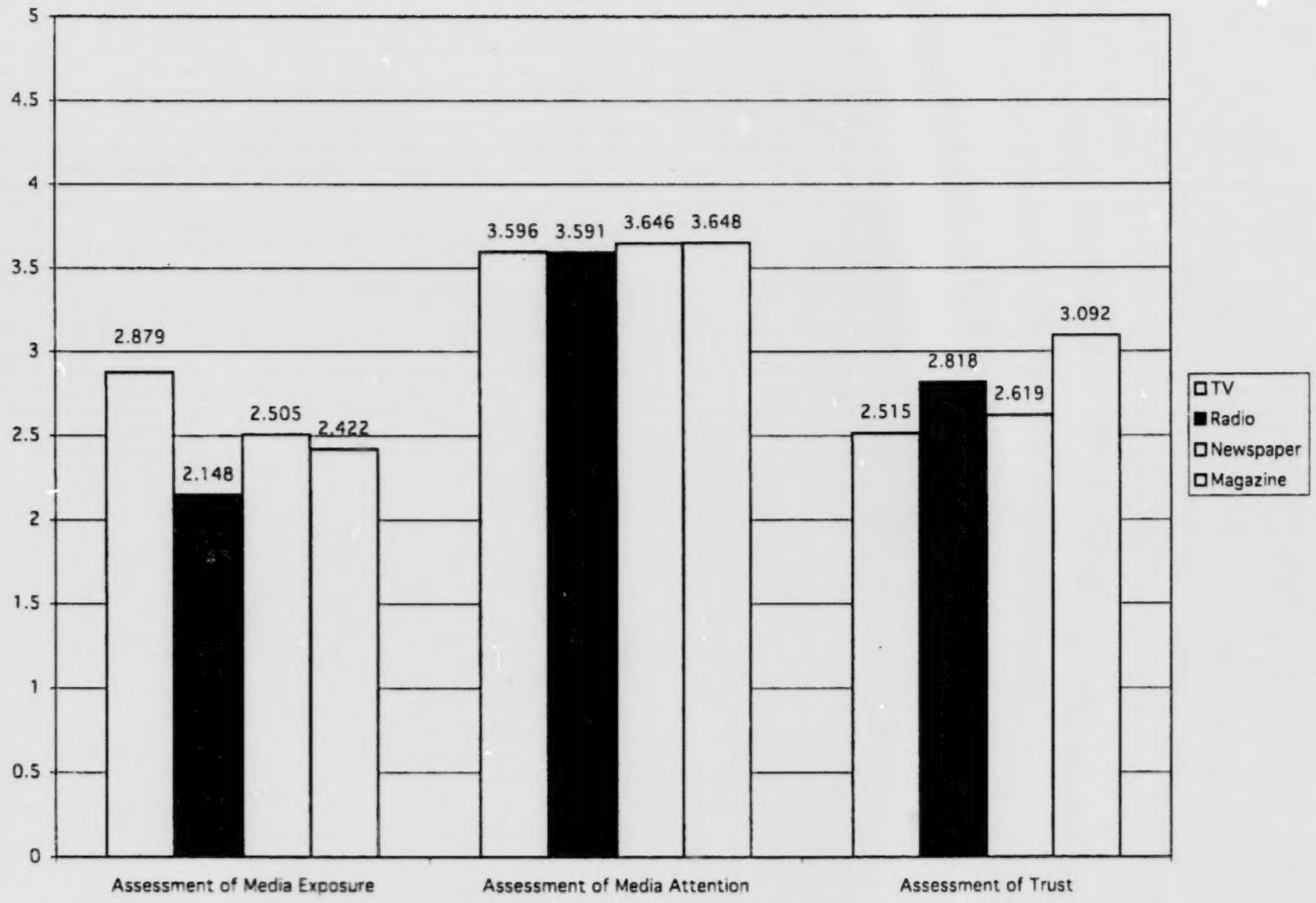

Figure 3. A comparison of producer assessment means for mass media use and trust

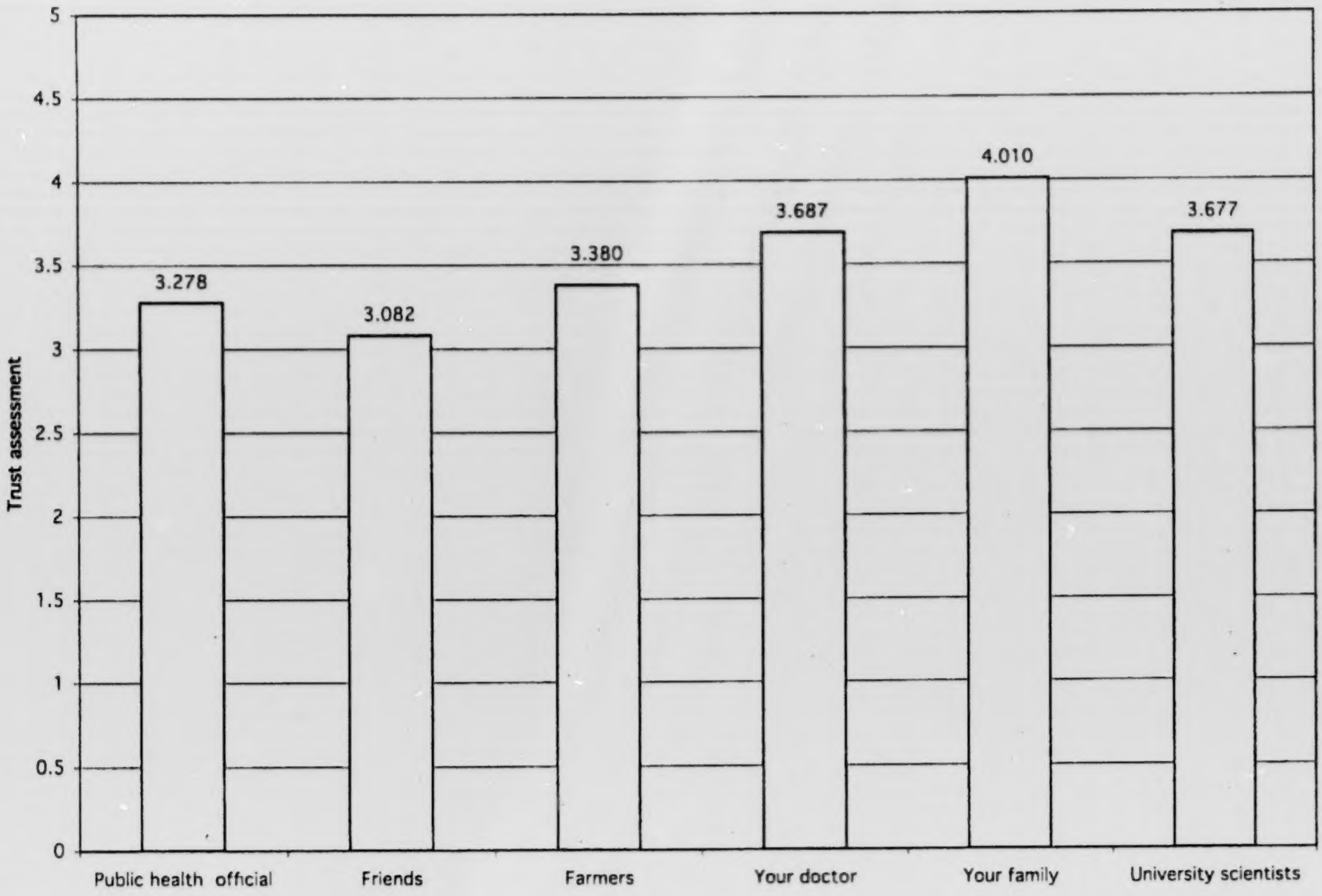

Figure 4. Trust assessment means for interpersonal information sources

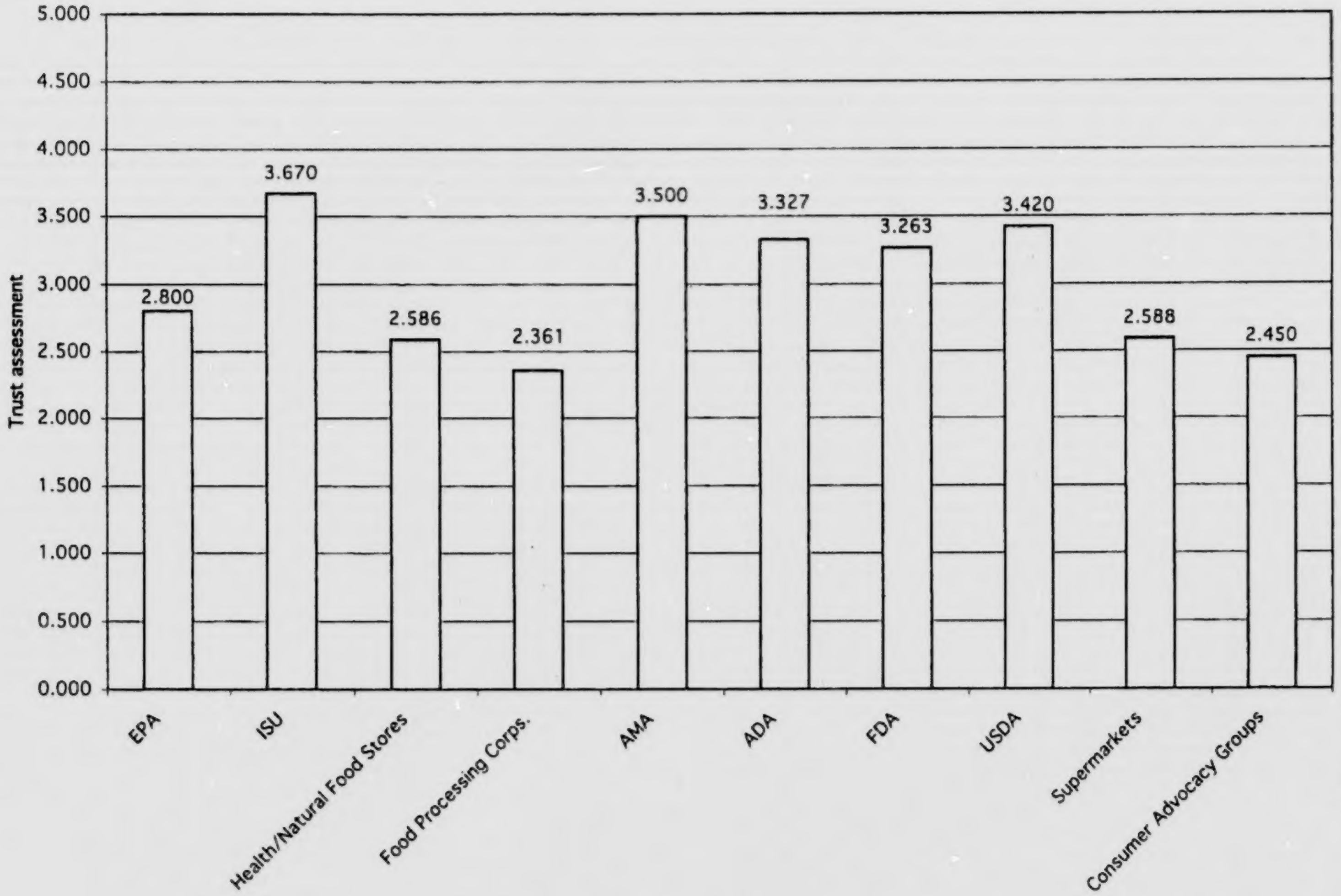

Figure 5. Trust assessment means for institutional information sources

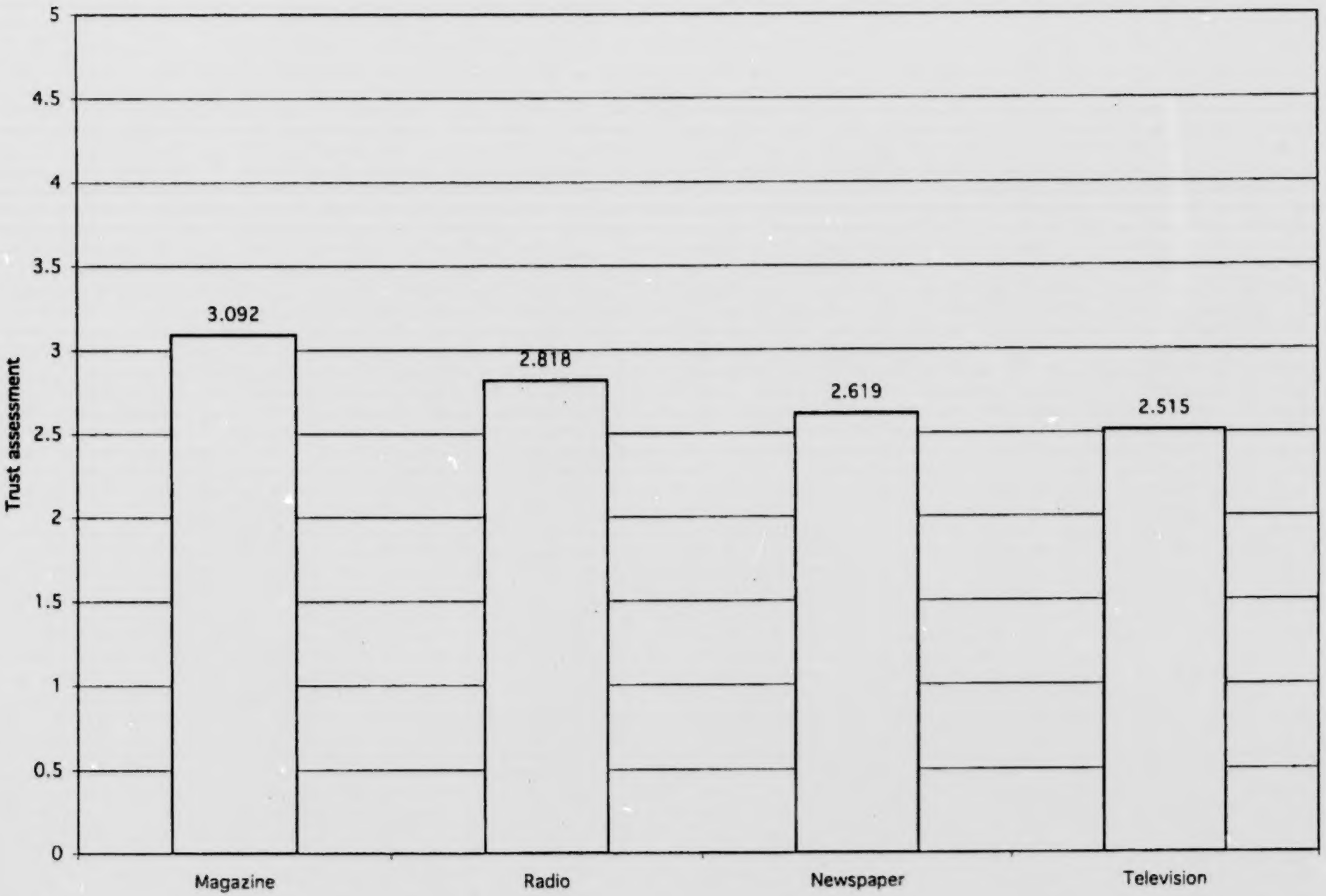

Figure 6. Trust assessment means for mass media information sources

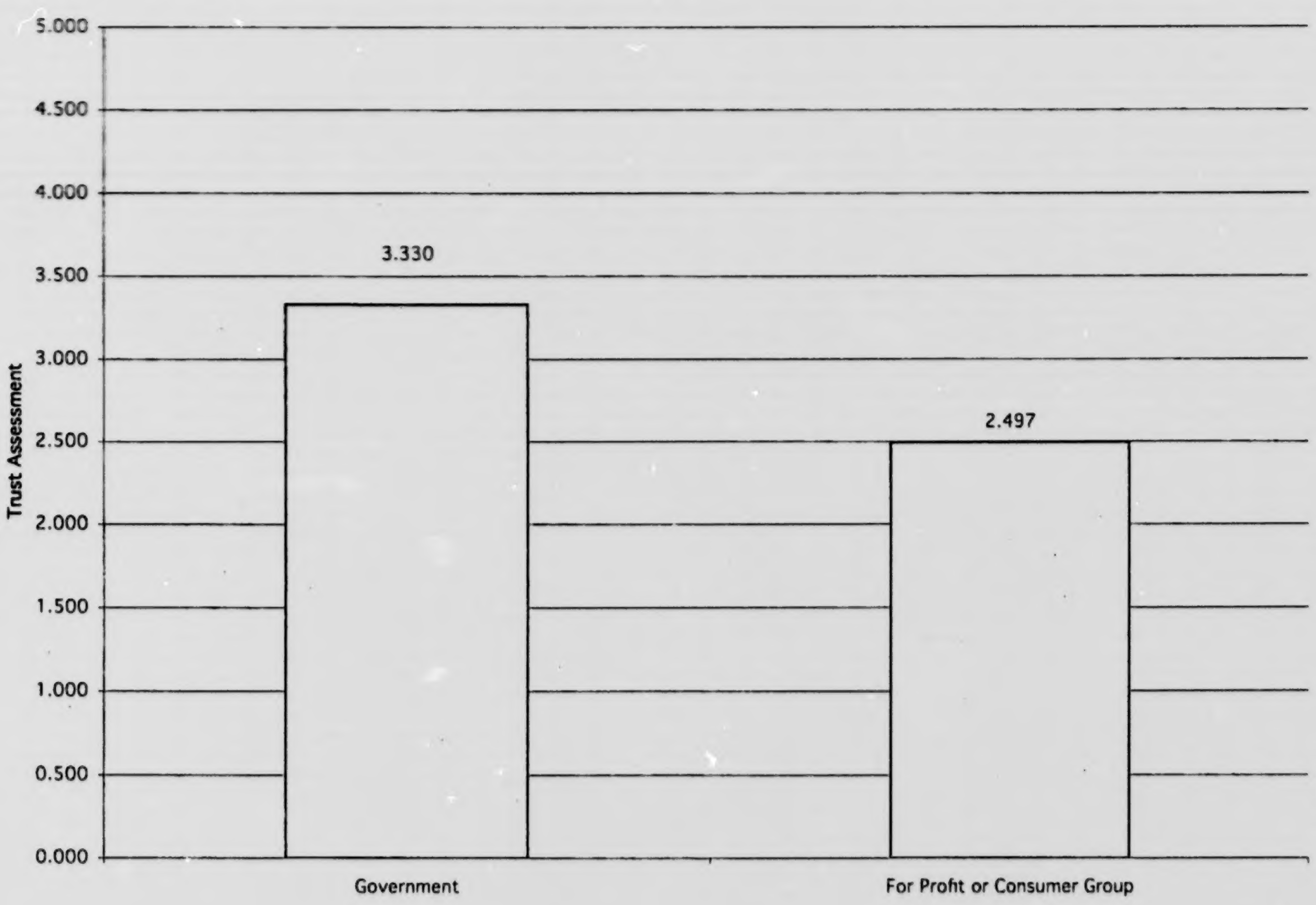

Figure 7. Trust assessment means for two institution types

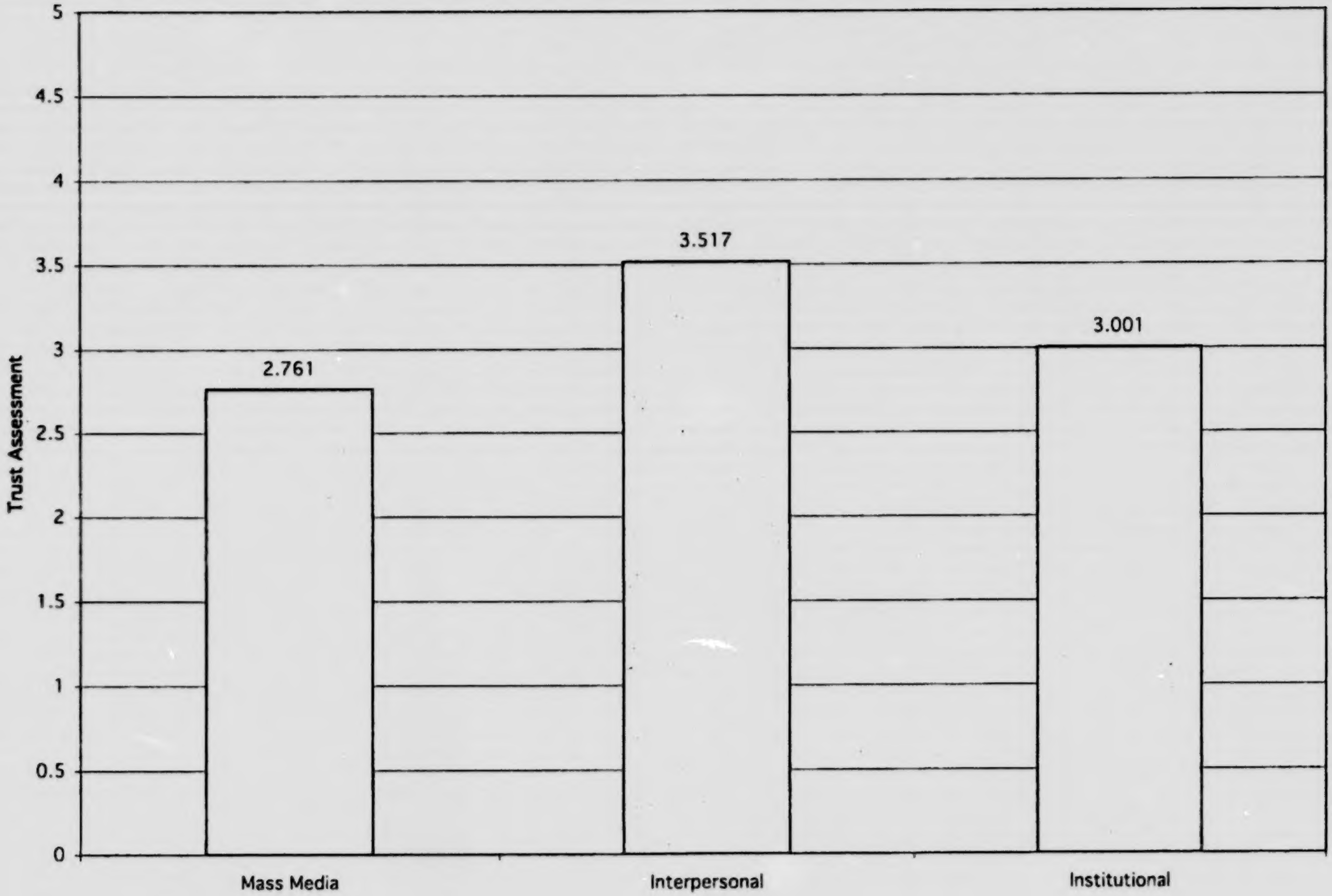

Figure 8. Comparing trust in mass media, institutional and interpersonal information sources

An Application of Message Sidedness: Encouraging Undergraduate Participation In Internship Programs

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An Application of Message Sidedness: Encouraging Undergraduate Participation In Internship Programs

ABSTRACT

The Heuristic Systematic Model of persuasion and message sidedness theory is used to investigate communications with undergraduate students about internship participation. An experimental design tested three message formats relative to message credibility, beliefs about internships, and behavior intentions, and investigated the role of prior thought and intent. Study results do not confirm previous message sidedness research, but do support the significant role of prior thought and intent. Practical implications and future research directions are offered.

Introduction

One of the most familiar forms of experiential education available today, and one that is thriving on almost every college campus, is the internship program for undergraduate students (Katula &Threnhauser, 1999). Previous research has argued repeatedly that the internship experience is mutually beneficial for students and employers. For instance, interns can provide inexpensive help to an employer, provide employers with fresh ideas, as well as provide a talent pool from which future full-time employees may be drawn (Cannon & Arnold, 1998). The benefits that accrue to students are plentiful. An internship may provide students with an understanding of organizational structure and protocol within a professional working environment (Katula & Threnhauser, 1999). In addition, Knouse, Tanner and Harris (1999) assert that the internship experience can improve student performance in college by helping them master valuable time management and communication skills, as well as help students develop an overall better self-concept. Finally, internships provide students with an opportunity to gain professional experience (Cannon & Arnold, 1998; Katula & Threnhauser, 1999) and may lead to a permanent position (Cannon & Arnold, 1998).

Despite the abundance of internship programs in universities, these types of programs have received little scientific scrutiny. Gault, Redington and Schlager (2000) argue this lack of attention diminishes the perceived legitimacy of field internship programs. While there have been several educators whom have made suggestions on how to improve or enhance career placement of their students (Cannon & Arnold, 1998; Gault, et al, 2000; Scott & Frontczak, 1996), such as by allocating additional resources to encourage student participation and present incoming students with appropriate information, few have addressed *how* a college should communicate with its students about these opportunities. More specifically, how do students process persuasive messages relative to internship opportunities? In addition, what type(s) of message(s) would be most persuasive? These are two questions that this article attempts to address.

The article is organized as follows: A literature review is presented that explores how students might process this type of persuasive message. Specifically, literature related to the Heuristic-Systematic Model (HSM), as well as message sidedness theory is reviewed. Following this review, a discussion of moderating variables, such as prior thought and intent, is provided. From these discussions, research questions and hypotheses are offered and tested through the application of an experimental design. The results of the experiment are then presented. The manuscript wraps up with a discussion of the results and offers future research questions to stimulate further exploration into internship programs. However, before reviewing the relevant literature related to the research questions at hand, a brief overview of what an internship program is and its previously documented benefits is in order.

Literature Review

Internships

According to Katula and Threnhauser (1999) an internship has traditionally been defined as any carefully monitored work or service experience in which an individual has intentional learning goals and reflects actively on what she or he is learning throughout the experience. Most internship programs are characterized by a specified number of work hours, a determination of whether the work will be paid or unpaid, credit being awarded for the work completed, and oversight provided by a faculty coordinator or other university representative and a corporate counterpart (Gault et al, 2000). The internship's formal purpose is to provide students with an understanding of organizational structure and a protocol within a professional working environment, as well as provide students an opportunity for professional development (Katula & Threnhauser, 1999; Cannon & Arnold, 1998). It has been widely used in a variety of university disciplines from social science and applied science to business and medicine.

Generally speaking, previous research has documented that an internship appears to be a "win-win" situation for all parties involved. Students, employers and schools may all benefit from the internship experience. There are several benefits that students may accrue. First, they may gain a better understanding of the similarities and differences in how classroom concepts relate to practical application. According to Coco (2000) students also gain improved knowledge of an industry as it relates to their career paths and personal interests, and their career ambitions also may become crystallized in the process. Students also may benefit from the experience by entering the workplace after graduation in a reduced state of shock, as well as gain faster advancements than non-interns (Cannon & Arnold, 1998). Many of these benefits are not only postulated and confirmed with research, but also are now expected by students (Cannon & Arnold, 1998; Jarvis, 2000).

The benefits that accrue to employers also are plentiful. Internships allow a company to evaluate a prospective employee nearly risk-free (Cannon & Arnold, 1998; Coco, 2000). Businesses benefit in several other ways as well, including: access to highly motivated and productive employees, the release of full-time employees from routine tasks, and the opportunity to evaluate and cultivate potential full-time employees (Coco, 2000).

The third beneficiary of an internship program is the university. Internships may help validate the university's curriculum in a real-world environment and can help the university with student placement after graduation (Coco, 2000). In addition, successful internship relationships may assist with garnering monetary support, guest lecturers and field trips..

In summary, while extant research suggests that schools should communicate to students more intensively about internship opportunities and their benefits, (Knouse et al., 1999), previous research does not address how to develop such messages or how students would react to such persuasive messages. Next, literature that will help make those determinations is reviewed.

Heuristic-Systematic Model of Persuasive Communication (HSM)

The HSM postulates two concurrent paths to persuasion and was developed to apply to "validity seeking" persuasion settings where people's primary motivational concern is to attain accurate attitudes that square with relevant facts (Eagley & Chaiken, 1993). According to the HSM, systematic processing is a comprehensive, analytic orientation to information processing in which perceivers access and scrutinize a great deal of information for its relevance to their judgment task. Eagley and Chaiken state that the validity of a message's advocated position (in this case, to seek out information about and participate in an internship) is judged by scrutinizing the persuasive argumentation and by thinking about this information in relation to other information a receiver may possess about the object or issue discussed in the message.

Heuristic processing, on the other hand, is conceptualized as a more limited mode of information processing that requires less cognitive effort and fewer cognitive resources than systematic processing. In such situations, recipients focus on heuristic cues, or simple decision rules, instead of focusing on the content of the argument itself.

For this study, the systematic path to persuasion is the focus of interest. The decision to seek out information and participate in an internship is highly involving, and current literature on internships argues that universities should focus more effort on advertising the benefits of internships to their students (Knouse et al., 1999). Thus, the route by which persuadees give thoughtful consideration to issue-relevant information, such as the benefits of internship participation, needs to be examined is it relates to messages concerning internships.

The HSM posits both cognitive and motivational determinants of processing modes. For example, prior knowledge about the message topic may enhance or bias systematic processing. Eagley and Chaiken (1993) also state that variables such as personal relevance, task importance, responsibility for message evaluation, accountability and need for cognition appear to motivate systematic processing.

In addition, the HSM assumes that people are cognitive misers, such that they must strike a balance between satisfying motivation concerns while minimizing their processing efforts. This is deemed the "sufficiency threshold." People will exert whatever effort is required to attain a "sufficient" degree of confidence that they have satisfactorily accomplished their processing goals. According to the HSM, the presence of the aforementioned variables, such as personal relevance, increases processing effort and, hence, systematic processing, because they increase people's desired levels of judgmental confidence. In this case, the message should be personally relevant to the audience due to the fact that the message topic (internships) is an experience designed specifically for the audience under study (undergraduate students).

Now, our attention will turn to an examination of message sidedness, and how variation in message appeals may affect message persuasiveness and processing.

Message Sidedness

Message sidedness refers to the style of argumentation within the message content. Allen (1991) delineates three types of message sidedness. The first, a one sided message, is defined as a message that presents only those arguments in favor of a particular position. A two-sided message presents the arguments in favor of a proposition but also considers the opposing arguments. Two-sided messages can be further delineated into non-refutational and refutational messages, where a two-sided refutational message mentions the counterarguments and then refutes them in an effort to demonstrate why the counterargument is inferior to the position advocated by the communicator. The two-sided non-refutational message, like the refutational message mentions the counterarguments of the position advocated, but does not refute them like the refutational message. The results of Allen's meta-analysis demonstrate that a two-sided message with refutation is more persuasive than a one-sided message while a one-sided message is more persuasive than a two-sided message without refutation.

Other research also has generally documented that two-sided persuasive messages (such as advertisements) tend to be viewed as more credible than their one-sided counterparts (Pechmann, 1992). Kamins, Brand, Hoeke, & Moe (1989) found that a two-sided communication elicited significantly higher advertising credibility and effectiveness ratings, higher evaluations of the sponsor in terms of perceived overall quality of service, as well as a significantly greater intention to use the advertised service than when compared to a traditional one-sided celebrity endorsement. Etgar and Goodwin (1982) also found that a two-sided appeal produced more favorable attitudes towards a new product introduction versus the traditional one-sided appeal. These few studies support Allen's (1991) recommendation that future studies, unlike previous ones, should incorporate all three types of messages, not just a comparison between one- and two-sided appeals.

Prior Thought and Intent

As previously stated, prior thought and intent may exhibit a strong influence on message processing. Previous research indicates that prior thought and intent biases the cognitive processing of persuasive messages such that individuals in high prior thought and intent evidenced significantly higher positive belief change and behavior change than did persons low in prior thought and intent, but not attitude change (Smith, Morrison, Kopfman, & Ford, 1994).

Crowley and Hoyer (1994), in their development of an integrative framework of two-sided persuasion, provide two propositions regarding the relationship between a person's prior knowledge and the effectiveness of two-sided messages relative to attitude change. The authors posit that if a person is not aware of negative information, counterarguments will increase and a two-sided message will be less effective than a one-sided message. Second, if a person has prior awareness of negative information about the issue, a two-sided and one-sided message will be equally effective. However, extant research has yet to empirically test these propositions.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

In light of the discussion of previous research findings on HSM, message sidedness, and prior thought and intent, the following hypotheses and research questions are offered:

> **H1:** Respondents exposed to a two-sided refutational message about the benefits of internship participation will generate more positive beliefs and behavioral intentions than respondents exposed to the one-sided or the two-sided non-refutational message.
>
> **H2:** Respondents exposed to a two-sided non-refutational message about the benefits of internship participation will generate less positive beliefs and behavioral intentions than respondents exposed to a one-sided message.
>
> **H3:** Respondents exposed to either type of two-sided message about the benefits of internship participation will rate message credibility higher than those exposed to the one-sided message.
>
> **RQ1:** Does prior thought and intent mediate the relationship between message sidedness and persuasiveness?

However, before investigating the above hypotheses and research question, relevant concerns of the population in question must be assessed in order to create the messages. Therefore, an additional research question is offered:

> **RQ2:** What are the specific concerns associated with student internship participation?

Phase One

The purpose of this initial phase was to obtain information from a sample of the population interest about their relevant concerns associated with internship participation in order to address only these concerns in a refutational message. The research question previously posed above is specifically addressed in this phase of the study.

Respondents in this phase were 274 undergraduate students enrolled in beginning level advertising and public relations courses at a major Midwestern university. Respondents received extra course credit for their participation. They were recruited to visit an online survey regarding internships. The survey was broken into several distinct sections, but the first section is most relevant to the research question at hand. Students were asked to write in what they felt were the biggest benefits and drawbacks of participating in an internship. Immediately after all responses were gathered, the researchers met to note common perceptions and concerns expressed by the respondents. The responses were summarized and evaluated to determine recurring concerns. Table 1 summarizes these results.

As the table suggests, the students realize the traditionally advertised benefits of internship participation; namely, it provides "real world," practical working experience, participation helps one establish contacts in the business world, and participation may give a student a long-term advantage over others who have not participated in internships after graduation.

However, the most prevalent concern students had regarding internship participation revolved around internship compensation. Many believed internships did not pay and stated that, even if the internship did provide compensation, they could still make more money elsewhere in service positions, such as in retail or restaurant positions. This is a real issue since many students have to hold part-time jobs in order to meet the rising demands of college expenses. Other recurring concerns expressed by students included the perceived time commitment required for internships and the manner in which interns are treated at their place of employment. Students perceive internships as taking them "away" from not only their course work and studies, but also the social aspect of the college experience. In addition, internships may conflict with their course schedules and if they decided to forfeit classes one semester in lieu of an internship opportunity, this forfeiture would delay their graduation date. Finally, students believe that interns are not treated well in the business world. For example, students believe that full-time employees look down on interns, may take advantage of them, and do not appreciate the work completed by interns.

TABLE 1: Recurring Expressed Perceived Benefits and Drawbacks of Internship Participation

BENEFITS OF PARTICIPATION	DRAWBACKS OF PARTICIPATION
Experience/Knowledge: • Gain real-world experience • Work in a professional setting • Apply education • Build skill set Networking: • Establish relationships • Build your reputation Future Pay-offs: • Get an edge over others in job market • Get your foot in the door • Receive higher salary	Pay/No Pay • Not enough, or any, compensation Time Commitment • If participating and taking classes, leaves no time for self • Time conflicts with classes; or have to forfeit classes in lieu of participation (delays graduation) Work environment • Not treated with respect, or as inferior • Unfriendly atmosphere; not appreciated; taken advantage of • Doing unrelated tasks

In addition to filling out this open-ended question in Phase One, students were also asked to fill out several scale items to measure their attitudes and perceptions of internships (these results are not reported on in this particular manuscript). Respondents also completed scale items relating to prior thought and intent, an independent variable in this study that will be explored in more depth in Phase Two. The scale contained five Likert-type statements (e.g., I have previously thought about obtaining an internship, I have considered the benefits of getting an internship, I have considered asking someone about internships, I intend to obtain an internship, and I intend to ask someone about obtaining an internship), where 1 = low agreement and 7 = high agreement, and produced an alpha = .8680.

Phase Two

Phase Two of the study utilized the concerns identified in Phase One to create persuasive messages designed to vary by sidedness of the message. The messages created are included in the Appendix, and will be referred to as the one-sided, the non-refutational, and the refutational message.

The same students who were recruited from Phase One of the study were re-recruited to participate in Phase Two of the study. A total of 241 of the original 274 students participated. In this phase, students were asked to visit one of three Web sites that contained one of the three messages developed about internships and were then asked to complete a post-exposure survey.

The post-exposure survey contained scale items to measure the dependent variables of message credibility, internship beliefs, and behavioral intent to participate in, or seek information about, an internship. The message credibility scale contained 5 seven-point Likert-type responses to adjectives (e.g., effective, appropriate, thorough, reliable, and believable) where 1 = low and 7 = high. High overall scores indicate higher credibility. The reliability of this scale across these items was alpha = .8260. Internships beliefs also were measured using Likert-type scale items, where 1 = low and 7 = high agreement. Five statements were used (e.g., internships are a worthwhile experience, internships are right for me, internships provide real benefits, internships are important to my future success, and participating in an internship is a smart thing) and resulted in an alpha = .8719. Behavior intent also was measured across a three-item, Likert-type scale, where 1= high and 7 = low. Hence, higher scores indicate lower behavioral intent. The statements produced an alpha = .9224.

Results of Phase Two

General Sample Characteristics

The sample of 241 responses was 66 percent female (N=159) and 34 percent male (N=82). The distribution of student class standing was as follows: 31 percent freshman (N=75), 32 percent sophomore (N=77), 23 percent junior (N=56), and 14 percent senior (N=33). The academic major cited by most respondents was advertising, at 35.7 percent (N=86); however, 17 percent (N=41) classified themselves as business majors, 12 percent (N=28) were communication majors, 10 percent (N=24) were telecommunication majors, and 18 percent (N=44) classified themselves as "other" majors with several students citing packaging, merchandise management, and no preference majors. The majority (54 percent) of students report holding either part- or full-time jobs in addition to taking their classes, as well as participating in extracurricular activities (57 percent). Only 18 percent of the sample (N=43) had previously participated in an internship.

Hypothesis 1

Hypothesis 1 posited that respondents exposed to a two-sided refutational message about the benefits of internship participation would generate more positive beliefs and behavioral intentions than respondents exposed to the one-sided or the two-sided non-refutational message. In order to test the hypothesis, two one-way ANOVA (message type X belief; message type X intent) with Scheffe's follow-up procedures were performed. Results are summarized in Table 2.

The results of the omnibus ANOVA suggest that overall, message type produced no variation in strength of beliefs about internships ($F_{(2,237)}$=.237, p=.789, n.s.). In addition, the Scheffe post-hoc test indicates that the refutational message did not produce significantly more positive beliefs (M=30.53, SD=5.99) than either the one-sided message (M=30.67, SD=5.09) or non-refutational message (M=30.12, SD=4.94).

With regard to behavioral intention, the omnibus ANOVA suggests that message type did not produce variation in behavioral intention ($F_{(2,235)}$=2.02, p=.135, n.s.). In addition, the Scheffe post-hoc test indicates that the refutational message did not produce significantly more positive behavioral intention (M=5.07, SD=2.68) than either the one-sided message (M=4.84, SD=2.50) or non-refutational message (M=5.68, SD=2.98). Therefore, results do not support hypothesis one.

TABLE 2: Omnibus ANOVA Results of Message Type By Belief and Message Type By Behavioral Intent

Message By Belief	Mean	SD	Statistic	Significance
One-sided (N=79)	30.67	5.09	.237	p=.789, n.s.
Non-Refutational (N=84)	30.12	4.94		
Refutational (N=75)	30.53	5.99		

Message By Intent	Mean	SD	Statistic	Significance
One-sided (N=77)	4.84	2.50	2.02	p=.135, n.s.
Non-Refutational (N=84)	5.68	2.98		
Refutational (75)	5.07	2.68		

Hypothesis Two

Hypothesis two posited that respondents exposed to the two-sided non-refutational message about the benefits of internship participation will generate less positive beliefs and behavioral intentions than respondents exposed to one-sided message. This hypothesis was tested using independent sample t-tests. Results are summarized in Table 3.

Results indicate that the non-refutational message did not produce less positive beliefs (M=30.11, SD=4.94) than the one-sided message (M=30.67, SD=5.09), $t_{(df=161)}$=.702, p=.483, n.s.. However, results did illustrate that the non-refutational message did produce less behavioral intention than the one-sided message (M=5.68 v. 4.84, respectively), but the difference was marginally significant $t_{(df=159)}$=-1.92, p=.057). Therefore, some support is given to hypothesis two with regard to variation in behavioral intent.

TABLE 3: T-Test Results Between One Sided and Non-Refutational Messages

Message By Belief	Mean	SD	Statistic	Significance
One-sided (N=79)	30.67	5.09	.702	p=.483, n.s.
Non-Refutational (N=84)	30.12	4.94		

Message By Intent	Mean	SD	Statistic	Significance
One-sided (N=77)	4.84	2.50	-1.92	p=.057
Non-Refutational (N=84)	5.68	2.98		

Hypothesis Three

Hypothesis three posited that respondents exposed to either type of two-sided message about the benefits of internship participation would rate message credibility higher than those exposed to the one-sided message. In order to test this hypothesis, a one-way ANOVA (message type X credibility) with Scheffe post-hoc analysis was completed. Results are summarized in Table 4.

Omnibus AVONA results indicate that message type did not produce significant variability in perceptions of message credibility, ($F_{(2,239)}$=1.13, p=.324, n.s.). In addition, the results of the Scheffe post-hoc analysis shows that neither type of two-sided message, refutational or non-refutational, produced higher message credibility ratings (M=28.74, SD=4.54 and M=4.03, SD=28.40, respectively) than the one-sided message (M=29.39, SD=4.16). Therefore, hypothesis three is not supported.

TABLE 4: Omnibus ANOVA Results of Message Type By Message Credibility

Message	Mean	SD	Statistic	Significance
One-sided (N=80)	29.39	4.16	1.13	p=.324, n.s.
Non-Refutational (N=84)	28.40	4.03		
Refutational (N=76)	28.74	4.54		

Research Question One

Research question one asked whether prior thought and intent mediates the relationship between message sidedness and persuasiveness. In order to investigate this relationship, the sample was first divided into 2 groups – those with high prior thought and intent and those with low prior thought and intent. This Hi/Lo split was achieved by taking the lowest one-third scores (those at or below 30) and the highest one-third scores (those at or above 35). Those respondents with scores in the middle range of 31-34 were excluded from the analysis. Therefore, only 166 responses were used in the analysis. Subsequently, message credibility was analyzed in a prior thought and intent (hi vs. low) by message type (one-sided, non-refutational, refutational) between subjects factorial analysis of variance. See Table 5 for cell and marginal means.

TABLE 5: Message Credibility Means BY
Prior Thought and Intent and Message Type

PTI / Message	One Sided	Non-refutational	Refutational	Overall
Low PTI	28.78	27.36	28.11	27.98
Hi PTI	30.13	29.54	28.74	29.54
Overall	29.55	28.27	28.40	

Results indicate a significant main effect of prior thought and intent on message credibility ($F_{(1,164)}=4.63$, $p<.05$), such that those with higher prior thought and intent rated message credibility significantly higher than those with lower prior thought and intent scores, regardless of message type. However, no main effect of message type was present ($F_{(1,163)}=1.05$, $p=.352$, n.s.), nor was there a significant interaction effect between message type and prior thought and intent ($F_{(2,163)}=.455$, $p=.635$, n.s.).

Discussion and Implications

The research was conducted for a variety of reasons. First, determining current students' perceptions of the benefits and drawbacks of internships is instrumental in developing relevant messages. Hence, if students can acknowledge and understand the benefits of internship *before* participating in an internship, then universities communicating these benefits may not only be wasting their time, but also their money on redundant messages. This study indicates that students are concerned about the nature of their compensation for internships, the time commitment involved in internship participation, and their possible treatment on the job. It may be that developing messages that communicate about these issues may prove more beneficial.

This study also attempted to use message-sidedness theory to possibly inform educators about how to communicate with their students about internship participation. Previous research has indicated that in the hierarchy of message sidedness, relative to persuasiveness, two-sided refutational messages are the most persuasive, followed by a one-sided message, and lastly, a two-sided non-refutational message. However, very few empirical studies have utilized all three formats in their experiments.

In this current study, most hypotheses were not supported, and therefore the results cannot support previous assertions about the effectiveness of message sidedness relative to communications about internships. However, one hypothesis that was supported was that a one-sided message did marginally affect behavioral intentions, such that the one-sided message was related to stronger behavioral intentions than a non-refutational message. This seems logical because the one-sided message only presented the most positive of information, while the non-refutational message included reasons why a student may not want to participate.

The research does, however, support the notion that prior thought and intent exhibits a strong influence on message processing. This, too, supports the notion that in order to develop an effective message strategy, it is important to gauge the characteristics of your audience. While this study didn't examine the role of class status, it could be another variable that plays a role in perceptions of message credibility. For example, it is likely that a strong relationship exists between class status and prior thought and intent. Juniors and senior-level students are likely to exhibit more prior thought and intent than freshmen and sophomores because they are closer to solidifying their career choices and entering the job market. In addition, junior and senior-level students are possibly more likely to have received prior messages about internships from counselors, academic advisors or professors than those just entering the college environment.

One possible explanation for why so few of the hypotheses were supported could be attributed to the nature of the test messages. While every attempt was made to construct messages that addressed the sample's concerns over internship participation, the messages themselves were not pre-tested to ensure the manipulation of the different levels of message sidedness. Future research that wishes to explore message sidedness ought to take this precautionary measure.

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APPENDIX

One-Sided Message: (all positive information)

Research consistently indicates that internship programs offer a mutually beneficial experience for both students and employers. For students, an internship can provide an understanding of organizational structures and protocol within a professional working environment. It also is an opportunity for students to gain professional experience that may lead to a permanent position upon graduation. And, participating in an internship can improve performance in college by improving skills such as time management and communication skills. There are internship opportunities available in almost every academic field. It is important that you realize several facts:

1. Once you graduate, internship participation can give you an advantage over other students who haven't participated in an internship.
2. Internships can help you determine if the career field you have chosen is right for you.
3. Internships come in a variety of shapes and sizes to satisfy different student time and financial commitments.
4. Internships are available every semester, including the summer months.

Get experience in your field NOW, before you graduate. Visit your department's internship coordinator today for details on current opportunities in your field of interest!

Two-Sided Non-Refutational Message: (positive and negative information but negative information has no refutation)

Research consistently indicates that internship programs offer a mutually beneficial experience for both students and employers. For students, an internship can provide an understanding of organizational structures and protocol within a professional working environment. It also is an opportunity for students to gain professional experience that may lead to a permanent position upon graduation. And, participating in an internship can improve performance in college by improving skills such as time management and communication skills. There are internship opportunities available in almost every academic field. It is important that you realize several facts:

1. Some internships are unpaid.
2. If you participate in an internship without taking classes at the same time, your graduation date may be delayed.
3. Internships may require full-time participation.
4. The specific nature, or duties, of your internship may have little to do with what a regular, full-time employee does on a day-to-day basis.

Get experience in your field NOW, before you graduate. Visit your department's internship coordinator today for details on current opportunities in your field of interest!

Two-Sided Refutational Message: (positive and negative information and negative information has refutation)

Research consistently indicates that internship programs offer a mutually beneficial experience for both students and employers. For students, an internship can provide an understanding of organizational structures and protocol within a professional working environment. It also is an opportunity for students to gain professional experience that may lead to a permanent position upon graduation. And, participating in an internship can improve performance in college by improving skills such as time management and communication skills. There are internship opportunities available in almost every academic field. It is important that you realize several facts:

1. While most internships are paid, some are not. However, students who have taken non-paying internships report high levels of satisfaction with their experience regardless of not being paid.
2. Internships are available every semester, including the summer months, so there is little chance that your graduation date would be delayed.
3. Internships come in a variety of shapes and sizes to satisfy different student desires of part-time or full-time participation.
4. While your duties as an intern may be considered entry-level, it is a misconception to think that interns are "gophers" for full-time employees.

Get experience in your field NOW, before you graduate. Visit your department's internship coordinator today for details on current opportunities in your field of interest!

A Public Journalism Model for the Middle East and North Africa:

Effectiveness of Media-NGO Relationships in Partial Autocracies

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A Public Journalism Model for the Middle East and North Africa: Effectiveness of Media-NGO Relationships in Partial Autocracies

By

David C. Coulson and Leonard Ray Teel

ABSTRACT

This study examines how the media and non-governmental organizations might work with each other to develop a model of public journalism in partial autocracies in the Middle East and North Africa. We found that a form of public journalism can be practiced in the region. It appears that despite working in partial autocracies where media generally are owned or controlled by government, journalists cooperating with NGOs can represent the needs and concerns of civil society.

A Public Journalism Model for the Middle East and North Africa: Effectiveness of Media-NGO Relationships in Partial Autocracies

Introduction

During the 1990s, non-governmental organizations proliferated by the thousands in Middle East and North African countries governed by what are termed "liberal" or "partial" autocracies.[1] This growth of NGOs has been phenomenal considering the persistence of authoritarianism as "an enduring and common feature of the Islamic world and Middle East political systems."[2] In analyzing the rationale of liberal autocracies, Daniel Blumberg argues that liberalization expands and contracts to suit the rulers. "The web-like quality of this political ecosystem both helps partial autocracies to survive and makes their rulers unwilling to give up final control over any strand of the whole."[3]

NGOs came to be seen as foci for emerging democratic forces in the Middle East and North Africa. But in post-9/11 analyses, NGOs are not seen as harbingers of democracy but as adjuncts to a "durable" liberalized autocracy.[4] As such, NGOs provide useful assistance to the region's autocracies but do not replace them. John Kelsay explains civil society organizations as expressions of a larger indigenous political compact: "complementarity." Complementarity is a familiar pattern in the Muslim world, evidenced by the power sharing between religious and political leaders. "Islam's emphasis on the complementarity of religion and politics creates a number of possibilities for the relationship between the religious community and state authorities; or more generally, between civil society and government."[5]

In many cases, NGOs were created to address needs not being met by liberalized autocracies because of recent international and domestic developments. The loss of foreign aid from the Soviet Union created "significant pressures on the traditional relationship between the state and society in the region." Regimes whose bargain for maintaining power required providing extensive social services suddenly reduced or eliminated some services despite growing urban populations. Financial pressures also led regimes to reconfigure long-standing economic policies, seeking foreign capital investments to "privatize" state-owned industries that previously had offered almost guaranteed employment. Meanwhile, improved access to education and to global communications was making populations more literate, more informed and more open to citizen involvement through the NGO movements.[6]

Across the Arab World today, many NGOs have developed plans of action concerned with a wide variety of issues and needs which until recent years were associated only with official government action, or inaction. These include: (1) concerns of daily life, such as access to drinking water in rural areas, prevention and treatment of disease, purity of food, and juvenile homelessness evidenced in some countries by ubiquitous "street boys," (2) conflicts with cultural or tribal traditions, such as the advocacy of education for girls, (3) human rights issues, such as abuse in the criminal justice system, violence against women and "honor" killings, (4) economic issues, such as unemployment and lack of start-up funding for small or "micro" businesses, and

(5) environmental concerns, such as the preservation of public places and protection of the natural environment.[7]

International media play a key role in publicizing the global trend toward development of NGOs. Less certain, however, is the relationship of the media to NGOs within Middle East and North African countries. Presumably, if civil society organizations were to follow the pattern of NGOs in the West, they would cultivate relationships with the media. Such relationships with traditional and new media help advance NGOs' goals and objectives in five significant ways: (1) project NGOs' legitimacy in the public mind, (2) expand the distribution of messages to wider audiences, (3) help mobilize citizens to respond to specific needs, (4) strengthen NGOs' voluntary organizational networks and attract new volunteer workers, and (5) provide evidence of the shepherding of existing funding and help attract new funding sources.[8]

The partial autocracies in the Arab World are ambivalent to the media-NGO relationships. They are seen in some quarters as a form of "privatization" in the social realm, mobilizing citizens to address needs not met satisfactorily by the state. Others in government regard the relationships as competing power centers, a risk or potential threat to the state, especially if the NGOs are funded by foreign public or private sources.[9]

Given the potential impact of media-NGO cooperation in the development of civil society initiatives in partial autocracies, it is of value to look at the applicability of public journalism to the relationship.

Public journalism developed in the context of American media and culture. The movement has been variously called civic journalism, participatory journalism or community journalism. Originating in the late 1980s and early 1990s, public journalism projects focused media resources on covering public issues as a way to "reduce people's disconnection with public life."[10]

Although public journalism has been identified almost entirely with the media and communities in the United States, the movement's ideas and applications are not bound to any one country or culture. With modifications sensitive to other cultures, public journalism can be useful for both journalists and their publics. Applicability can extend to cultures without a tradition of press freedom and civic responsibility, as in partial autocracies in the Middle East and North Africa, insofar as the concepts prove useful in current situations.[11]

The phenomenal growth of the region's non-governmental organizations as representatives or mediators for public causes signals an expanding sense of civil society. The purpose of this research is to examine how the media and NGOs might work with each other to develop a model of public journalism in partial autocracies in the Middle East and North Africa.

NGOs have grown according to their ability to identify with needs not met by governments or charities in the Arab World. Volunteer help and financial support comes from sources both inside their countries and internationally. Given their external support, NGOs are required to register within the countries where they operate. Registration usually requires disclosure of officers, sources of funding, and beneficiaries of expenditures.

In the Arab World where there is little or not tradition of civic empowerment, the growth of the NGO movement represents a historic coalescence of societal involvement at the grassroots level. Although NGOs in no way represent all points of view on any specific issue, they do provide an organizational nucleus around which civic discourse can occur and where plans of action can be developed and undertaken.

Typically, media in the region are owned by the governments. Although some newspapers and magazines have freedom to publish without direct censorship, journalists nonetheless observe pre-publication self-censorship and are subjected to post-publication government confiscation, fines and imprisonment. Some newspapers have expanded editorial independence by publishing in Europe. Nearly all television and radio broadcasting in the Arab World is owned by governments which control the messages directly or indirectly.

In pre-workshop exploration, the authors identified rudiments of public journalism practiced in the Middle East and North Africa. Clear differences emerge in that (1) media are government owned or influenced, (2) social concerns are represented by NGOs rather than by loosely organized gatherings of citizens, and (3) interactions between the media and NGOs occur not in a democracy but in partial autocracies. Nonetheless, the authors saw this interaction as a variant of public journalism that could be examined and tested in a non-democratic society.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Recognizing the rapid growth and importance of NGOs, aided by expanding communication capabilities of mass media, four research questions were posed:

(1) How well do the media and NGOs work together to advance civil society initiatives in partial autocracies in the Middle East and North Africa?

(2) What obstacles do the media and NGOs face in working together to advance civil society initiatives in partial autocracies in the Middle East and North Africa?

(3) Can public journalism criteria developed in the United States be applied in partial autocracies in the Middle East and North Africa?

(4) Can an indigenous model for public journalism be developed for partial autocracies in the Middle East and North Africa?

METHODOLOGY

Before the methodological approach is discussed, it is necessary to define the concept of non-governmental organizations more rigorously for the limited theoretical framework of this research. Existing literature on NGOs has begun to stress the need for specificity.[12]

When American decision makers use the term, they tend to have in mind organizations explicitly independent of state power, usually secular in purpose and organized to expand rights and services within their societies. In other parts of the world, especially the Middle East and North Africa, NGOs tend to cover a far wider range of social activities and services, including faith-based social service organizations and the whole range of welfare providers. Although NGOs in partial autocracies may function independently of government, their funding and activities are subject to monitoring and surveillance as potential rivals of the state.[13] This research adopted the international definition of NGOs as opposed to the American one. This clarification of NGOs will eliminate most hurdles in our understanding of their relationships with the media.

We adapted a definition of public journalism developed by one of the movement's originators, Jay Rosen. Our analysis of whether public journalism applies to the Arab World is largely based on how he defines the process by which the media: (1) address people as potential participants in public affairs, (2) help the political community act upon its problems, (3) improve the climate of public discussion, and (4) speak honestly about civic values and take on the role as a public actor.[14]

These criteria were chosen because they describe central characteristics of public journalism as they relate to its original purpose: a process "to reduce people's disconnection with public life." Although there are numerous other interpretations of public journalism, many of them can be categorized as insightful reflections on the ramifications of the process.[15]

This research applies the four tenets, or criteria, to six case studies the authors developed in the Middle East and North Africa.

Case study methodology is appropriate in analyzing the complex dynamics involved in public journalism. Notable applications of this methodology are the basis for much of the literature on the subject, including the books *Civic Journalism: Six Case Studies,*[16] *Don't Stop There! Five Adventures in Civic Journalism,*[17] and *The People's Choice: The Media, The Campaign, and the Citizens.*[18]

Study of a complex social phenomenon through a thorough examination of an individual case provides an opportunity for intensive analysis of many specific details often overlooked by other methods and permits the drawing of inferences and generalizations applicable to other cases of the same type.[19] Further, case studies as experiments "generally play a greater role in the evaluation of interventions"[20] such as those in this study.

The six case studies were developed during a series of workshops between September 1999 and December 2002 with Middle East and North African journalists and NGO representatives in Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, United Arab Emirates and the Palestinian National Authority. These five counties and the Palestinian National Authority were chosen because they represent diverse populations living in partial autocracies in three regions across the Arab World: the *Magreb* region of North Africa, the Middle East, and the Arabian Gulf.

The workshop structure was chosen for three reasons: (1) it provided a forum for free expression of successes and obstacles in the media-NGO relationships; (2) the dynamics created an intense laboratory in which the media-NGO cooperation could be openly tested in various stages; and (3) it provided for specific outcomes. The outcomes were production of cooperatively written media-NGO stories, publication of the stories, which sometimes were revised for broadcast, in a special supplement distributed inside a major daily newspaper in the workshop country, and development of an expandable network linking workshop participants.

Each workshop paired 10 to 12 journalists with a similar number of NGOs. Participants were nominated from within each country, with final selections made by the workshop organizers. Journalists were chosen from indigenous print and broadcast media, with concern for diversity in gender and professional experience. NGO representatives were chosen from a variety of organizations representing a broad spectrum of community issues, with concern for diversity in gender and degrees of experience in working with the media.

For the case studies the authors selected examples of media-NGO cooperation that came closest to advancing a potential model for public journalism. Because our purpose is to determine the applicability and utility of public journalism to the region, we chose one case from each of the five countries and the Palestinian National Authority that best contributes to an understanding of the dynamics of a public journalism model in partial autocracies.

CASE STUDIES

Egypt: Street Boys

Mouchira Moussa is a journalist for *Al Ahram*, Egypt's largest newspaper, published in Cairo. She specializes in writing stories about the city's social problems and in the 1990s became particularly interested in the plight of young boys who lived on the streets, worked for menial wages or begged for money. They obviously did not attend school and were joining the ranks of the illiterates. Her interest in the "street boys" led her to join a NGO dedicated to helping them.

At *Al Ahram*, Moussa wrote a series of stories that underscored the nature and extent of the problem. With her interviews and photographs she personalized the issue, giving "faces" to the otherwise annonymous boys whom everyone in the city notices but seldom saw.

Simultaneously, she published ideas for possible public and private solutions. She featured the efforts of the private organization which she had joined. The NGO has a building where street boys can live and attend school until they graduate. She is particularly proud of one young man named Ahmed who came off the streets and now has graduated from college.

Working in concert with the NGO over a period of time – rather than on one isolated and more easily forgettable occasion – Moussa kept a spotlight on this issue and mobilized public opinion and volunteer support.

The media-NGO relationship worked effectively largely due to the initiative of one concerned, skilled and senior journalist. She distinguished herself as both an advocate for the NGO's cause and as a master storyteller.

An initial challenge to her success with the story lay in the fact that homelessness was an old problem to which citizens of Cairo had become complacent. Moussa overcame this civic insensitivity by humanizing the problem with personal interviews and photographs. She portrayed the homelessness of boys as a social challenge distinct from adult homelessness. The civic importance of salvaging the lives of homeless boys was communicated graphically through cooperation between the journalist and the exemplary NGO.[21]

Three of the tenets of public journalism correlated with this case. In publicizing the problems and solutions for homeless youth, Moussa and *Al Ahram* addressed citizens as "potential participants in public affairs." Focused on non-profit and volunteer efforts, the stories clearly gave the community options for acting upon a problem. The newspaper stories addressed citizens of Cairo as potential volunteers in public affairs. This was done in part by speaking honestly about civic values.

There was no evidence, however, that the media-NGO link improved the climate of public discourse.

Jordan: Victims of Conflict

A victim of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, a 14-year-old Palestinian girl stepped on a land mine while herding her family's four sheep. Hania underwent emergency surgery at a hospital near her refugee camp in Gaza. She lost both feet. "I would have felt more pain and hurt," Hania told a journalist, "had I lost one of my sheep."[22]

Through the cooperation of two NGOs, one in Gaza and the other in Jordan, Hania was transported via Cairo to Amman where her wounds were treated and arrangements were made to take her to Iran for rehabilitation and prosthetics.

In Amman, journalist Aman Al-Sayeh represented the story of Hania as symbolic of the work of NGOs during the Al-Aqsa Intifada, which began in September 2000. The NGOs in the Palestinian areas cooperate closely with those in Jordan, where the population is at least 50 percent Palestinian. Care for Hania was sponsored by the Women's Division of the Islamic Action Front, which "covers the treatment costs of the wounded who cannot be treated in Palestinian hospitals due to lack of adequate treatment and overcrowding."[23]

In this case, the cooperation of the media and NGOs focused on storytelling. The journalist's story and photographs depicted civil society actions already undertaken on behalf of Hania and other victims aided by the NGOs in Gaza and Jordan. .

The obstacle in this case was a privacy issue. Al-Sayah needed consent from the NGO and the family to interview and photograph the injured girl in the Islamic Hospital in Amman.

The media-NGO cooperation satisfied the four criteria for public journalism. It addressed people as potential participants in public affairs "rather than as victims or spectators." It showed how the community could act upon, "rather than just learn about," its problems. Through the journalist's focus, the story spoke honestly about civic values and role of citizens as public actors. He also improved the climate of public discussion by reporting on how private, rather than public, funds can assist victims of conflict.

This case suggests that a public journalism model for the areas of conflict in the Middle East and North Africa might necessarily involve advocacy for victims of conflict and for civil society organizations attending to the needs of victims.

Lebanon: Criminal Justice

Volunteers for a Lebanese NGO, Dar Al-Amal, concerned with the plight of women prisoners uncovered the case of a teenaged girl sentenced to prison for killing her newborn child. According to the girl, her parents falsified her birth record and sold her underage at 13 to be married. After the marriage, she said, she was raped by her husband's father. When a baby was born, she alleged he killed it and forced her to confess to the murder.[24]

The girl's story intrigued Najia Al-Houssari, a reporter for a London based Arab daily newspaper, *Al Hayat.* She teamed up with Dar Al-Amal's representative at the media-NGO workshop in Beirut in 1999 and began to fully investigate the case. Al-Houssari's published stories strengthened public belief in the girl's innocence and led to her release in March 2003 after four years in prison.[25]

This was a case of interventionist cooperation between the media and a NGO. A newspaper journalist advanced a cause identified by a NGO.

However, the media-NGO initiative faced obstacles because it was in the government's interest to promote the perception of the integrity of the Lebanese criminal justice system. The government strongly resisted having to admit two grievous errors: (1) convicting the wrong person, and (2) sending an underage girl to prison.

Two criteria of public journalism can be identified in this case. The media and NGO spoke honestly about their civic values and took on the role as public actor. In the process they helped the political community to act upon its problems by raising public awareness of wrong doing in the criminal justice system.

On the other hand, the media-NGO effort did not address people as potential participants in public affairs. It did not expect action from the public so much as top-down action by public officials. Neither was there evidence that the isolated case improved the "climate of public discussion." Although the Lebanese consider their government to be democratically elected and therefore not an autocracy, their politics are controlled from Damascus by Syria's autocratic Ba'ath Party.[26]

The case further illustrates that a model for public journalism in partial autocracies could be founded on alliances between media and public service NGOs. The Lebanese example also shows that the media-NGO relationship is strengthened in countries where externally based or international media are free to operate, as in the case of London based *Al Hayat*. Further, says Lebanese media scholar Marwan Kraidy, "the strong tradition of Lebanese private enterprise bolstered by a free-wheeling economy, a powerful banking industry and low tariffs" greatly strengthens its civil society organizations.[27]

Morocco: Empowerment of Women

Fatima was a wife and mother in rural Morocco who was suddenly cast as the head of the household when her husband abandoned her. Because he contributed little to the upkeep of the family, Fatima had been forced to be resourceful. After he left she sought assistance from a NGO that seeks to empower women by helping them start micro businesses.

The Moroccan Association for the Promotion of Feminine Enterprise helped Fatima plan a small business raising sheep. The association also granted her a small loan that enabled her to buy two breeding sheep. A Moroccan journalist chronicled how Fatima repaid the loan and received a larger one. With continued business support from the association, she began employing others to assist her as her enterprise grew. The journalist's story cited Fatima as symbolic of the work of the Casablanca based NGO.[28]

The NGO's exemplary story of Fatima and the sheep was complemented by the journalist's ability to tell the tale as a success story. While representing the special interests of women, the NGO also served a socio-economic need not being met by government. The urban journalist's main challenge of finding isolated rural people with success stories was solved through cooperation with a NGO.

This case study approximates public journalism in all four respects. It addresses people as potential participants in public affairs and shows alternative ways the community can act upon problems of abandonment and destitution. Portrayal of women as entrepreneurs improves the climate of public discussion. Finally, the story speaks honestly about the civic values of empowering women as public actors both in NGOs and as recipients of NGO assistance.

This example suggests that a public journalism model for the Middle East and North Africa would consider the potential compatibility of journalists and NGOs who represent grounded socio-economic values. NGOs are enriched with untold stories, and journalists are the storytellers.

United Arab Emirates: Ecosystem

The uncontrolled harvesting of baby sharks has intensified in the Arabian Gulf, prompting environmentalists to warn about dire consequences for the marine ecosystem. In the United Arab Emirates, Dr. Saif Al Ghais, the local spokesman for the International Union for the Conservation of Nature, has warned that sharks "are likely to be replaced by another predator like the barracuda" which may "adversely affect other species of marine creatures."[29]

Dubai journalist Dominick Rodriguez publicized the NGO's warning about the increasing demand for baby sharks as aphrodisiacs, prepared in sauces, curries, or boiled and sautéed in herbs and spices. "A man eats lady sharks, a woman eats man sharks," a vendor told Rodriguez at the Dubai Fish Market where beds of ice displayed 20 male and female baby sharks. Rodriguez's story noted that sharks have a low reproductive rate, averaging only five or six babies.[30]

The media and the international NGO with a UAE chapter worked together to publicize the hazard to the ecological balance and to recommend restrictions on the harvesting of baby sharks.

This case met the four criteria for public journalism. It identified people as potential participants in public affairs, while helping the political community identify a problem as a prelude to action. The story also improved the climate of public discussion.

"Many organizations and people have been referring to it in their work," Rodriguez noted.[31] The cooperation also speaks honestly about civic values and journalism's role as a public actor.

The case's focus on protection of the ecosystem suggests that a model for public journalism in the region would rely upon NGOs as watchdogs and providers of expertise, particularly when scientific trends and data are required.

Palestinian National Authority: The Dispossessed

Recent Israeli military strategy has ordered the bulldozing of hundreds of Palestinian homes and gardens, displacing thousands of people. Israelis have justified demolitions on the grounds that the homes belonged to terrorists or their families or sympathizers, or were built illegally. In the case of Sameh Jabber, his wife, five children and his mother, the Israeli Housing Authority ordered their two-room house demolished allegedly because they had no license to build it.

The Jabber family attracted the attention of Palestinian journalist Kawthar Salam because it won the right to keep the house while neighbors' homes were demolsihed. The difference she learned was that the Jabbers had legal assistance from a NGO. Salam's story chronicled not only the family's hardships but also the role of the NGO in saving homes scheduled to be destroyed.[32]

The Palestinian Society for the Protection of Human Rights and the Environment represented the Jabber family. After three years of appeals and postponements, the NGO obtained an order from the Israeli Higher Court stopping the demolition. In addition to other court victories banning demolitions, the NGO provides legal counseling and representation in the Israeli Supreme Court.

This case study adheres to the four criteria for public journalism. In focusing on the struggle of one family and a NGO to prevent a demolition, the journalist demonstrates that Palestinians are potential participants in public and legal affairs. The reporting on the legal collective action helps the community address its problems. The attention given homeless victims provides a forum for improving the climate of public discussion. The journalist's reporting on Palestinian property rights in her account of the conflict speaks honestly about civic values and takes on the role as a public actor.

Conclusions

This research's case studies in Middle East and North African partial autocracies demonstrate how the media currently work to advance civil society initiatives by cooperating with non-governmental agencies that represent diverse groups of citizens and civic issues. In the absence of a tradition of civic empowerment in autocratic regimes, the growing number of NGOs provides evidence of dramatically increased interest by citizens in identifying and solving problems and unmet needs. According to a recent study, the rapid increase of new mass media capabilities has strengthened and broadened the scope of grassroots movements as well as other traditional organized interests in the region.[33]

NGOs are the catalyst for self-help action to address civic issues. Some action is focused on problems of "grassroots organizations that grow out of and contribute to a sense of the limited capability of national governments to deliver the basics of life."[34] Other NGOs focus on issues such as human rights that have been neglected or deliberately ignored. In addition, NGOs have provided the media with new perspectives on persistent problems.

The obstacles to media-NGO cooperation are significant. At least two factors mitigate cooperation. Government-run media is the norm across the Middle East and North Africa, and officially sanctioned information dominates the news pages and air waves. Also, governments tend to regard NGOs with suspicion, requiring registration and financial reports on their sources of income. A 2002 study reports that "in Egypt, Morocco, and Jordan the sheer proliferation of small NGOs . . . has made 'divide and rule' easier."[35]

Aside from government suspicions, NGOs are not models of pure virtue. They cannot escape all the defects or corruptions inflicting other types of bureaucracies. Neither are they models of pure voluntarism, because NGOs and governments often cooperate and help each other.[36] A founder of a new public journalism network in the United States posed this question: "Who convenes the residents and ensures that a special interest group has not stacked the deck in favor of one cause or another?"[37]

The six case studies in this research demonstrate a continuum of media-NGO cooperation across the Arab World as represented by Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, United Arab Emirates and the Palestinian National Authority. In four of the cases, the media-NGO relationships subscribe to all four tenets of public journalism as defined in this study.[38] We'll first review how the criteria apply in those four cases and then discuss the other two examples.

In the four cases the media and the NGOs "addressed people as potential participants in public affairs." In Morocco, the emphasis is on encouraging women to become entrepreneurs with public persona. In the Palestinian National Authority, anguished and impoverished people allied with a newspaper and a NGO and found sanctuary as participants in a public legal forum. In Jordan, NGOs through the media ask citizens to share the burden of caring for victims of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. In the United Arab Emirates, the media worked with a NGO to warn about the ecological damage of harvesting baby sharks and to help mobilize public intervention.

Media-NGO relationships also "helped the political community act upon its problems" by identifying them and proposing solutions. In all four cases the political community is characterized by inaction. Poverty is widespread in Morocco, and the media-NGO solution of empowering entrepreneurs actually assists the government with a viable alternative to nearly nonexistent welfare. The media-NGO cooperation in the Palestinian National Authority to protect against demolition of houses provides the only prospect for a "political community" so constricted by conflict and death that defense of personal property is a low priority. In Jordan, the media and a NGO energized the political community to provide more medical assistance for victims of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The media and an environmental NGO have raised the level of discourse on the catching of baby sharks to the point where the government may consider the issue as a legitimate, broadly based concern, demanding action.

An "improved climate of public discussion" would offer some hope for many people in the Arab World doubly victimized by poverty and lack of civic models. In the four case studies the media and NGOs served to provide models for action through success stories. In Morocco, entrepreneur Fatima is an encouraging example to her community. Similarly, Sameeh Jaber brought attention to a means of legal recourse in a

Palestinian community destroyed by demolitions. The story of the young Jordanian shepherd girl focused discussion on how private funds are coming to the aid of innocent victims of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. In the United Arab Emirates, the baby shark controversy verified the monarchy's acknowledged interest in public discussion of issues that place the nation's well-being above private interests.

The final way that the four case studies qualify as public journalism is that the media "speak honestly about civic values and take on the role as a public actor." The Moroccan journalist voiced defense of gender empowerment as a public virtue. The Palestinian journalist encouraged the hopeless to resort to law as an alternative to inaction or violence. The Jordanian journalist demonstrated the solidarity of the Muslim community to care for fellow Muslims in the Palestinian National Authority. And the journalist in the United Arab Emirates pitted concern for the ecosystem against profitable commercial interests. In urging government action beneficial to the country at large, the media and civil society act in roles "complementary" to the state.[39]

In the other two cases in Lebanon and Egypt, media and NGO cooperation meets at least two of the four tenets of public journalism. The relationships clearly helped the political community act upon its problems. Beirut journalist Najia Al-Houssari worked closely with the NGO in giving visibility to the legal case of the girl wrongly accused of murder and helping lead to her eventual vindication. In Cairo, Mouchira Moussa's personal reporting style spurred community action to rescue "street boys" with the assistance of a NGO.

In both cases the media spoke honestly about civic values and took on the role as a public actor. As a champion for the young girl's innocence, the Lebanese reporter focused attention on the corrupt criminal justice system. Likewise the Egyptian reporter grew her story into a public issue largely through her own advocacy of civic action to rescue street boys. However, there was no evidence that her story improved the climate of public discussion. The two stories focused on "the variety of non-governmental organizations that provide alternatives to the national control of the means of subsistence and justice."[40]

The case study in Lebanon failed to meet two tenets of public journalism. These failures reflect upon the nature of public discourse in partial autocracies. The story of the imprisoned girl was not presented to engage people as potential participants in public affairs. It was recognized that their intervention in legal matters would have been of marginal consequence.

Neither was there evidence that the story improved the climate of public discussion *before* the girl's verdict was reversed. Convinced of the girl's innocence, Al-Houssari targeted government decision makers for her stories. She had the freedom of working for an Arab daily newspaper published in London rather than in Lebanon, where media are not only affected by regulatory factors but also by economic and political factors in the form of turf wars between different branches of the government.[41]

Taken together the six case studies demonstrate that a form of public journalism can be practiced in the Middle East and North Africa. In fact, some of the journalists in the workshops practiced it under very different circumstances from the United States, and not under the name public journalism. It appears that despite working in partial autocracies where the media are generally owned or controlled by government, journalists can represent the needs and concerns of civil society.

In Arab countries with little or no tradition of civic empowerment, public issues are not uncommonly voiced by diverse non-governmental organizations. Journalists have found that the NGOs are a doorway through which they can gain access to a wealth of information. In the process, the media have begun to diversify their sources, departing from the historic dependence upon only government officials and spokespersons.

Although public journalism was created specifically for adoption in the United States and other democratic societies, this research indicates that a variant of the public journalism model can be practiced in partial autocracies.

An indigenous model of public journalism for the Middle East and North Africa would incorporate the four tenets of the American archetype. In addition, it would include four criteria recognizable in the Arab media culture and primarily related to the political reality of partial autocracies.

From the American model three of the four tenets applicable in the Middle East and North Africa are the need to "address people as potential participants in public affairs," "help the political community act upon its problems," and "improve the climate of public discussion." During our series of workshops Arab journalists from Morocco to the United Arab Emirates employed these public journalism techniques for the benefit of their communities and states.

The range of issues they addressed are as diverse as the countries in which the media and NGO operate. However, the predominant issue across the Arab World is problems associated with poverty. Reflecting this, the case studies in Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco and the Palestinian National Authority are linked to fundamental needs for employment, housing, medical assistance and legal reform. By contrast, in the wealthier region of the Arabian Gulf, citizens of the United Arab Emirates can afford to concern themselves about the impact of commercial fishing on the marine ecosystem.

The fourth tenet in the U.S. model recommends that the media "speak honestly about civic values and take on the role as a public actor." The case studies exemplify not only the "honest" discourse of Arab journalists when dealing with civic matters but also their hope, and even passionate desire, that their interventions might make a difference.

The four criteria likely to be associated with a Middle East and North African model of public journalism stem from two prominent realities. One is that governance by partial autocracies traditionally has discouraged grassroots activism. The other is that Arab journalists are more subjective and their work more storied than that of their American counterparts whose work is imbued with the concept of objectivity.

In the traditional top-down governments in the Arab World, the increasing numbers of non-governmental organizations present themselves as the natural representatives of civic issues, values and needs.

First, as indicated in the case studies, an indigenous model for public journalism in the Middle East and North Africa would rely on NGOs as "middlemen" connecting citizens with each other and with their government. Although NGOs represent special interests, Arab journalists have managed to locate many with honest civic goals. The case of the abandoned wife and mother in Morocco as a model for women entrepreneurs probably would not have surfaced for the urban reporter without the middleman NGO. While the story benefited the objectives of the NGO, it also served broader civic purposes.

Second, in instances when government either lacks data or denies access to them, the media would depend on NGOs as alternative sources of statistical, scientific, legal, and historical information. The NGO in the Palestinian National Authority kept statistics on home demolitions, and the one in the United Arab Emirates developed its own data on the environmental impact of baby shark harvesting.

Third, the media would occasionally champion a NGO cause, as occurred in the case study in Lebanon where the ruling of a court was overturned.

A fourth characteristic of public journalism in the Middle East and North Africa would relate to language and storytelling. The flourishing of NGOs has provided rich new sources of stories told with the flowing richness of the Arabic language and involving large human themes and values: conflict, survival, justice, and compassion.

In summary, this study found that the media and non-governmental organizations have worked in cooperation in partial autocracies in the Middle East and North Africa. We demonstrate that a public journalism model can be developed for the region, blending tenets identified by the founders of the movement in the United States with characteristics distinctive to the Arab World.

Although this case study approach affords an opportunity for the intensive analysis of many specific details often overlooked by other research methods and represents a cross-section of the region, the investigation is limited by the inability to generalize to other situations in other countries and other times. Constraints of time and resources allowed us to conduct workshops in only six of the 22 countries in the Arab World. Additionally, although these case studies straddled the time period before and after September 11, media-NGO cooperation may be affected by the U.S. led war with Iraq.

Given the expected expansion and development of media technology taken together with the anticipated growth of civil society organizations in the Middle East and North Africa, there appear to be many opportunities for related studies in the region. Other research might examine whether a model for public journalism can be adapted in other parts of the world, such as the former Soviet republics of Central Asia.

Notes

[1] Daniel Blumberg, "The Trap of Liberalized Democracy in the Arab World," *Journal of Democracy*, 13:4 (Oct. 2002), 56-68.

[2] Farhad Kazemi, "Perspectives on Islam and Civil Society," *Civil Society and Government*, eds., Nancy L. Rosenbaum and Robert C. Post (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2002), 320.

[3] Blumberg, "The Trap of Liberalized Democracy," 57.

[4] Blumberg, "The Trap of Liberalized Democracy," 57.

[5] John Kelsay, "Civil Society and Government in Islam," *Civil Society and Government*, eds., Nancy L. Rosenbaum and Robert C. Post (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2002), 294.

[6] Amani Kandil, presentation to Media-NGO Workshop, Al Ahram Regional Press Institute, Cairo, Sept. 26, 1999. Kandil is executive director of the Arab Network of NGOs.

[7] Kandil, Sept. 26, 1999..

[8] Dennis J. Sullivan, "NGOs and Development in the Arab World: The Critical Importance of a Strong Partnership Between Government and Civil Society," *Civil Society and Democratization in the Arab World*, 9:102 (June 2000). This is the journal of the Ibn Khaldun Center for Development, Cairo. Sullivan contends that NGOs in Egypt, Jordan, Palestine and Lebanon "are limited by inadequate resources, lack of governmental financial support, duplication of functions, weak organizational setup, lack of routine external audits, absence of strict internal rules and regulations, and administrative inefficiency."

[9] Said Eddin Ibrahim, *The Crisis of Democracy in the Arab World* (Beirut: Center for Arab Unity Studies, 1984).

[10] Tom Dickson, Wanda Brandon, and Elizabeth Topping, "Editors and Educators Agree on Outcomes But Not Goals," *Newspaper Research Journa*, 22 (4, 2001): 2

[11] Arguments for an international impetus toward public journalism were made in January 2003 in the founding of the new Public Journalism Network. America's "experiences with civic journalism would be a rich resource of new initiatives and possibilities for us [in Japan]," said Hideya Terashima, journalist with the regional Japanese newspaper *Kahoku Shimpo*; he is a visiting Fulbright Scholar at the DeWitt Wallace Center for Communications and Journalism at Duke University. Another charter member advocating international public journalism initiatives was Ana Maria Miralles, professor of journalism at Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana in Medellin, Colombia.

[12] Akira Iriye, "A Century of NGOs," *Diplomatic History*, 23 (3, 1999): 422.

[13] Kandil, Sept. 26, 1999.

[14] Jay Rosen, "The Action of the Idea: Public Journalism in Built Form," in *The Idea of Public Journalism*, ed., Theodore L. Glasser (New York: The Guilford Press, 1999), 44.

[15] Dickson, Brandon and Topping, "Editors and Educators," 2,3.

[16] Staci D. Kramer, *Civic Journalism: Six Case Studies: A Joint Report by the Pew Center for Civic Journalism and the Poynter Institute for Media Studies*, ed. Jan Schaffer and Edward D. Miller (Washington, D.C.: Pew Center for Civic Journalism, and San Francisco: Tides Foundation, 1995). The six case studies occurred in Charlotte, N.C., Madison, Wis., Tallahassee, Fla., Boston, San Francisco, and Seattle.

[17] Pat Ford, *Don't Stop There! Five Adventures in Civic Journalism*, ed. Jan Shafffer (Washington, D.C.: Pew Center for Civic Journalism, and San Francisco: Tides Center, 1998). The five case studies occurred in Springfield, Mo., Peoria, Ill., Binghamton, N.Y., St. Paul, Minn., and Portland, Maine.

[18] *The People's Choice: The Media, The Campaign, and the Citizens* (Washington D.C.: The Pew Center for Civic Journalism, 2000). In 2000, the *Savannah Morning News*, New Hampshire Public Radio, and the *Philadelphia Inquirer* won the James K. Batten Awards for Excellence in Civic Journalism.

[19] Ranjit Kumar, *Research Methodology* (London: Sage Publications, 1996), 99.

[20] Ronald D. Franklin, David B. Allison, and Bernard S. Gorman, eds., *Design and Analysis of Single-Case Research* (Mahway, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1997), 1.

[21] Mouchira Moussa, "Home for Street Boys," *Al Halina*, September 1999, 5-6. *Al Halina* (meaning: family) was the media-NGO workshop newspaper distributed by the Cairo daily newspaper *Al Ahram*. The original stories appeared in *Al Ahram*.

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[22] Aman Al-Sayeh, “Explosion stole Hania’s feet,” *Al-Azem* [Amman], May 2001, p. 1. *Al Azem* (meaning: determinination) was a supplement distributed the the Jordaninan daily newspaper *Al Ra’i.*

[23] Aman Al-Sayeh, “Explosion stole Hania’s feet,” 1.

[24] Najia Al-Houssari, “ Workshop about Lebanese women’s rights,” *Al Hayat*, Jan. 1, 2000.

[25] Najia Al-Houssari to Leonard Ray Teel, March 30, 2003. “The girl was released a couple of days ago, after she was declared innocent and spent four years in prison. Her lawyer proved she’s mentally retarded.”

[26] In 2000, Gibran Tueni, editor of Lebanon’s leading daily newspaper, *An Nahar,* published a bold editorial stating that Lebanon no longer needed the Syria’s political and military presence, a legacy of the Lebanese Civil War. In response, the Syrian ambassador rebuked anyone who presumed to meddle in Syrian policy.

[27] Marwan M. Kraidy, “Broadcasting Regulation and Civil Society in Postwar Lebanon,” *Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media*, 42(3, 1998): 387-400.

[28] “Fatima’s Microbusiness,” *Takarob* [Casablanca], Oct. 8, 1999, p. 1. Takarob (meaning: closeness) was a supplement circulated in the Moroccan daily newspaper *Al Ittihad Al Ichtiraki.*

[29] Dominick Rodriguez, “Hunting Baby Sharks to Extinction,” *Earth Scream* [Dubai], Feb. 4, 2003, p. 2. *Earth Scream* was a special supplement circulated in the UAE daily newspaper *Al Ittihad* on the occasion of UAE’s National Environment Day.

[30] Rodriguez, “Hunting Baby Sharks to Extinction,” 2.

[31] Dominick Rodriguez to Leonard Ray Teel, March 8, 2003. Rodriguez wrote, “The impact of the feature story I wrote about overfishing of sharks is a positive one as many organizations and people have been referring to it in their work. Dr. Eisa Abdel Lateef of the Zayed Prize for the Environment (an organisation based in Dubai) referred to the danger of the sharks’ extinction and proliferation of other predator species in his speech today (March 8, 2003), while the Emirates Environmental Group carried a reference in their monthly update to the shark problems caused by overfishing. I am sure there may be many more instances of the shark article having an impact on the reading audience….”

[32] Kawthar Salam, “Sameeh Jabber’s Family Stays Under His Roof,” *Assiraj* (Ramallah), May 30, 2001, 1, 4.

[33] Paul S. Rowe, “Four Guys and a Fax Machine? Diasporas, New Information Technologies, and the Internationalization of Religion in Egypt,” *Journal of Church and State* 43(1, 2001): 81-92.

[34] Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*, Vol. 1 of Public Worlds Series (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), 168.

[35] Brumberg, “The Trap of Liberalized Autocracy,” 63.

[36] Lester Soloman, “The Rise of the Nonprofit Sector,” *Foreign Affairs*, 73 (4, 1994): 109-122.

[37] Leonard Witt, “Tap in to opinions of rank,file on war,” *Atlanta Constitution,* Jan. 23, 2003, A14.

[38] The definition of public journalism was adapted from Rosen in *The Idea of Public Journalism*, 44.

[39] Kelsay, “Civil Society and Government in Islam,” 311.

[40] Appadurai, *Modernity at Large*, 190.

[41] Kraidy, “Broadcasting Regulation and Civil Society.

Exploring Radio Public Service as Civic Journalism

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Exploring Radio Public Service as Civic Journalism

ABSTRACT

This paper seeks to begin a discussion of radio public affairs programming as an outlet for topics within a civic journalism model. Dominant music-format radio stations in a major radio market were surveyed to determine their scheduling of and attitude toward programming public affairs on the station. Simultaneously, a sample of potential radio listeners was surveyed to measure uses of radio and attitudes toward public affairs type programming.

Exploring Radio Public Service as Civic Journalism

American broadcasting is clearly defined within a context of private ownership, which influences and even dictates how radio stations operate. Reviewing the origins of broadcasting in the United States as it developed in the 1920s shows how the private-ownership philosophy emerged from the Radio Conferences and other public policy debates over who would operate and control radio (Dominick, Sherman, & Messere, 2000). Simultaneously, countries such as England and the Netherlands chose instead to create public systems that would be operated by a government division or within clear government constraints (DeMars, 2002; Gross, 1995). The private versus public philosophy has had a clear impact of the kinds of programming distributed over radio, with a private system giving the audience 'what is wants' (judged by ratings) and the public system giving the audience 'what it needs' (judged by those in power to make programming decisions).

What specific programming impact exists in advertiser-supported media? Rogers and Woodbury (1996) note the research of Steiner (1952) and Spence and Owen (1977) that demonstrated that advertising-supported media discriminate against programming aimed at small audiences. If a particular style of programming may be judged as 'quality' or 'high culture' and touted as 'good for the audience,' but the majority of the audience appears disinterested, the logic of profitability dictates that the most mass-appeal programming will be broadcast. This limitation is of particular interest to those who believe media content should be more public- and civic-minded.

Buzenburg (1997), noting accomplishments at National Public Radio, however, suggests radio should give the audience what it needs, not what it says it wants. This view may be seen as an essential aspect of public or civic journalism. Buzenburg argues that radio is a great medium for ideas and has a unique strength in such areas as story-telling and immediacy. The depth of stories on National Public Radio's *Morning Edition* and *All Things Considered* is unique to public radio; such depth does not exist in typical private system operations. On a comparable front, Vestey (1998) discusses some technical and programming problems in the BBC radio service in England, but still contends their public service programming maintains a high level of quality in news, current affairs, documentary, and dramatic productions. In particular, Vestey point to a truism of public radio in specifying a particular lengthy program that was carried on successive nights. The drama was a quality production, was not likely to be carried on any other public system in the world, and had a small audience, but was produced and aired because it was a quality program.

Based on these comparisons and the expected limitations that may currently exist in how to embrace the public in mediated discourse, this exploratory study seeks to measure the potential local radio has an instrument to be nurtured as the 'rebirth' of public journalism seeks to move beyond standard news reports.

Public Interest Versus Markerplace Regulation

From the first true American broadcast regulation, government policy stipulated that broadcasters were 'loaned' the airwaves, which belonged to the people, and were required within such a public trust to program in the public's interest, convenience and necessity (Head, 1976). Regulations from the 1927 Radio Act and the Communications Act of 1934 laid the framework for the Federal Communications Commission to assure that broadcasters served their public, under the threat of losing the frequency they were assigned. A particular philosophy thus emerged from the 1920 and 1930s that carried well into the 1970s, and local-market, commercial radio stations made a standard practice of airing local news information and public service announcements designed to inform and benefit the public.

This 'forced' civicly-responsible approach has been lost in recent years as a marketplace philosophy supplanted this original approach in the late 1970s; that philosophy has grown and evolved into what exists today (Dominick, Sherman, & Messere, 2000). Each local station operator before could own only one station of a particular service (AM or FM) in the market and, more recently, no more than 20 stations nationwide, creating broad competition. Further, the FCC required each station to formally assess (ascertain) its audience's needs, provide programming to meet those needs, and document those findings and programs on a quarterly basis. Currently, one company can own an unlimited number of radio stations nationwide and up to five FM or AM stations or a total of eight stations in the largest markets. At the same time, those stations have no particular quotas of public service and in the marketplace philosophy are assumed to serve their audience if they can reach the audience necessary to remain financially secure. Ascertainment and public service are not a component of the current model of operation.

The marketplace philosophy clearly benefits owners, and it may be viewed as a reasonable means of serving the audience. When only a few stations existed in a market, it may have been necessary to require all to be 'full-service' stations. Today, some stations are allowed to focus on the entertainment function and others (e.g. news/talk and public radio) serve the information function. The problem with such an approach, however, lies in interpreting what the mass media means to a democratic society. If the media can be assumed to play some role in developing the attitudes and behaviors of the society in which they operate, what effects or responsibility issues are there? One concern might be that the marketplace philosophy undermines the equal share of power that is inherent in a system that allows each citizen to be involved in government control (Kellner, 1990). Again, this is an essential underlying component of civic journalism. Can the 'mind candy' of popular music dominance in private-control radio subjugate important issues when the audience may in fact be receptive to hearing and embracing discussions that affect their lives?

As an anecdotal reference, reviewing contents of any well-developed, local, small-market newspaper helps shows this kind of information function of the media. Such a paper will report a 'police blotter' with all area arrests, accidents, criminal activities, and other police actions. The local city council meeting will be covered, as will the county elected-body's events, the hospital district's actions, the actions of grand juries, and the activities in relevant courtrooms. Granted, major metropolitan papers cover similar materials, but must make more editorial decisions to eliminate much of the content because of volume, and the readership is much less likely in the large city to be as in touch with the information and know the people involved as the small-town reader is. A similar limitation is placed on the entertainment media like radio that do not address issues of public concern, and, in doing so, may make such issues seem less prominent and therefore less important to the audience.

Music Effects and a Theoretical Perspective

The marketplace regulation model leads to radio stations that focus on tightly-formatted music-driven programming. The music becomes the message within this model of operation, and the message of what is *not* being said (public discourse) may be just as powerful as the message that is being presented through music programming. A brief review of music as a component in acculturation may therefore be useful.

Popular music is generally recognized as serving a communication function in a society. Lull (1992) says "popular music is a unique and extremely influential communications form that deserves serious analysis...in the scholarly literature and classroom as well" (p. 1). Radocy (1992) attempted to analyze the importance of music to people and suggested that, while the origin of music for humanity is unknown, its significance is indisputable. Radocy lists ten functions of music in people's lives, from Merriam (1964), including "symbolic representation, enforcing conformity to social norms, contribution to the continuity and stability of culture, and contribution to the integration of society" (p. xi-xvii). If music radio plays such an important role with its audience, what music radio does not do may be equally significant in its potential impact toward establishing in an audience a percpeption of what is important and what is not.

Since music is considered by scholars to be a significant topic of study within communication, music radio's potential impact on culture likewise warrants study. Popular music as a significant programming element in radio gives it even more significance in mass communication study. The exposure of listeners to the lyrics of popular music and the possible resulting effects have been researched thoroughly and will not be addressed here. However, music radio should be understood within the context of the current study to establish a base of understanding for what music radio means to its audience. With such an understanding, researchers may be better able to understand commercial music radio's ability to establish a norm in which concern for substantive discussions of important social topics is diminished, and the easiest and therefore most profitable content is viewed by management as best serving the audience.

While instances reviewed for this paper document the content of music and allude to possible effects in such areas as sexual or violent content of music, researchers typically stop short of strongly arguing for a finding of definite effects. Day (1992) for example makes several comments suggesting that media effects continue to be questionable, including "the jury is still out on the variety of effects the media. . .have on their audiences"

(p. 209). Jo and Berkowitz (1994), on the other hand, say a question no longer exists of whether or not violence depicted in the media can lead to aggressive behavior, noting that "such an effect can occur and often does" (p. 44).

With effects not widely verified, this study remains situated in a critical studies approach, suggesting that the elements of popular culture found in music radio programming can frame issues, reinforce a dominant ideology, and present a language of communication (semiotics) within their presentation that influences cultural attitudes and behaviors. Related back to the focus of this research, this review shows that scholars do recognize there is a message in music. The related context to the current study is that there is a message to the audience by the way programmers focus on providing music and not providing any other range within the forum for analysis and evaluation of important topics. There is a message in many popular songs, which is assumed to be endorsed by the airing of the song. There is a similar message provided to the audience by what is not discussed. This brief review of popular music relates to the current study because the primary audience for radio is still driven by attraction to music programming, as would be shown through a review of the top-rated stations in any given major or large market.

The textual analysis for the current deviates from typical critical inquiry by collecting and interpreting statistical data; however, no statistical analysis has been developed since the datya collected attempts only to document patterns of thinking. Critical inquiry does not by its nature necessarily avoid finding patterns thrugh some data collection.

The Study

As an exploratory study, dominant music-format radio stations (n=18) in a major radio market (among the ten largest markets in the United States) were surveyed to determine their scheduling of and attitude toward programming public affairs on the station. Simultaneously, a convenience sample of undergraduate university students (n=64) was used to measure uses of radio and attitudes toward public affairs type programming.

The programming department at each radio station was asked the number of hours per week their station had in public affairs programming, what percentage of the programming was produced in-house (as opposed to syndicated or acquired from another source and therefore without local content), in which time period(s) the programming aired, why the station runs the programming, and how they expect their listeners to respond to the programming. This small sample sought to answer two major questions:

Research Question 1: Will major market music-format radio stations have some public affairs programming, and will it will be aired in low audience-size dayparts?

Research Question 2: Will major market music-format radio stations more frequently have programs which they do not produce?

In the survey of potential audience members, respondents were asked how much they listen to the radio, their most important reason for listening, their anticipated response to hearing a public affairs discussion program, their ideas concerning the best and worst aspects of local radio stations, the type of music they preferred, and how they spent their leisure time. The audience sample was 70% white, 11% Hispanic, 9% African American and 10% other races or mixed race. All respondents were within an age range of 18-34, with the majority within an 18-24 range. Dominick, Sherman, and Messere (2000) note that almost 55% of radio listeners are under 35 years of age. As expected in measuring the age-range of respondents in this study, just under 50% reported listening to current hits kinds of music found on R & B and CHR stations, almost 30% reported listening mostly to rock/modern rock formats, and small percentages listened to AC, Contemporary Christian, and Country. Only one respondent listed a non-commercial station as the favorite station. Three major findings were expected from this small sample:

Research Question 3: Will the majority of people surveyed regularly listen to radio and do so mostly for music?

Research Question 4: Will the majority of music format listeners turn away from the station if an information/ discussion program comes on?

Research Question 5: Will the majority of radio listeners report radio as a less important leisure activity than other common options, such as watching TV or going out?

Results

From the radio stations surveyed, all reported some public affairs programming, and all was scheduled on weekends. The most common time period for scheduling public affairs programs was Sunday mornings. Of the percentage of programming produced in-house, responses varied more widely than expected with 60% reporting all produced in-house, 40% reporting less than 50% of their programs being produced in-house, but none reporting all their programming being outside productions. The amount of time weekly devoted to public affairs programming varied from 30 minutes minimum up to two hours maximum. Most often, the station said their reason for airing public affairs was to serve their listeners, and they expected people would listen mostly based on the topic.

Research Question 1 is supported since all stations reported some amount of public affairs programming, but all aired their programs during low audience-size time periods. Research Question 2 is not supported since the majority of stations reported producing some or all programming themselves.

From the potential audience members surveyed, 85% reported listening to radio mostly for music. Of those who listened mostly for music, 86% reported that they would listen and judge before changing the station if they were listening to music and a public affairs-type program started, 7% said they would change the station immediately, and 1% said they would listen to the program. A commonly reported answer regarding the worst aspect of local radio was 'commercials.' This choice was not included on the survey in order to not prompt the response, yet it was still written in frequently, showing advertising as a tune-out factor in music radio. Regarding leisure activities, 53% reported television as dominant in leisure-time activity, 25% reported going out as dominant, and 22% reported radio listening as their dominant lesiure-time activity.

Research Question 3 is supported, as most of the respondents reported music as their most important reason for listening to radio. This listening time obviously varies and can be measured against the percentage of those who watch TV or go out more often than listen to radio.

Research Question 4 is rejected, as the majority of respondents reported they would not immediately turn away from a public affairs program but would wait and judge interest. Research Question 5 is confirmed, as the majority of respondents report more leisure time spent with television and going out than with using radio.

Limitations

Perhaps the biggest question from this initial study remains in the area of reported anticipated behavior of audience members when public affairs programs air. Since this study only asks what a person expects to do, application to a real listening situation is questionable. An experimental situation would more clearly demonstrate what listeners would really do. Also, data gathered in this study uses small samples that cannot be generalized to the larger population. No correlations were measured and research questions were answered only through frequency counts. Since this initial study is grounded in crtitical inquiry, this level of data evaluation is appropriate.

Conclusions

The results from this exploratory study confirm some beliefs about radio listening related to programming. Music formatted stations focus on playing music and audience members report music as what is most wanted from the stations. However, audience members suggest from responses gathered in this study that, even though music interruption from commercials is unwanted, interruption from discussions which interest them may be embraced. The implication is that with all the stations reporting public affairs programming in small audience listening time periods, programmers expect listeners to be mostly disinterested. In fact, creating and presenting the kind of material of interest to the audience and used within a realistic programming strategy may be desirable and beneficial.

There is reasonable support to the idea that radio stations' programmers expect listeners to mostly not want public affairs programs, as demonstrated by all material on all surveyed stations being aired in low audience-size time periods. However, there is contradictory information presented, since programmers report airing public affairs programs to serve listeners and expect listeners to be interested based on particular program topics. At the same time, listeners report that their first reaction to hearing programming would be to evaluate it, not dismiss it immediately. The suggestion is that radio programmers may be able to incorporate useful information content into their entertainment programming and actually improve their listenership rather than alienating audience members. This initial finding is the primary intent of this exploratory study—to determine if a civic journalism approach toward the content of radio public affairs might be incorporated. Once the 'third voices' of the community have been included in content discussions in radio public affairs, the next step of the research should be to attempt to measure audience response.

If the media can be seen as playing an important role in communicating meaning to the audience, currently done more through music/entertainment than information/ discourse, this potential may be achieved through rethinking public affairs in music radio and giving the audience more of what it needs. In particular, what the audience needs may be more inclusion in the discussion and more programming that addresses topics of interest that often are overlooked by programmers who seek only to fill program time in some obligatory way, but to not involve the public as part of the full interaction of a communication process.

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Attn: Program Director or Assistant

RETURN BY FAX TO ____________________

Greetings:
I am collecting some basic data for a research project regarding amount and scheduling of public service programming on major market, music format, radio stations. Could you please take just a minute to respond to and fax back answers regarding your station? No information will be used that identifies you or your station. For purposes of clarification, I am defining public affairs as extended news-issues discussion programs.

1. How many hours a week of public affairs programming does your station carry? _____ none _____1-2 _____3-4 ____ 5+
(if none, go to #5)

2. What percentage of this programming is produced in-house?
___ zero ___less than 25% ___ 26 -50% ____51-99 % ____ all

3. What time period(s) does the programming run?
_____weekdays between 6 am and midnight
_________specify which, if only one specific day
_____weekdays between midnight and 6 am
_____Saturdays between midnight and 6 am
_____Saturdays between 6 am and midnight
_____Sundays between midnight and 6 am
_____Sundays between 6 am and noon
_____Sundays between noon and midnight

4. If you have any public affairs programming, why would you say is the one MOST IMPORTANT reason you do?
_____ serves our listeners _____company policy_____ concern for FCC actions _____ tradition of doing it _____other (list)____

5. How do you mostly expect your listeners to respond to public affairs programming?
_____ listen based on topic ____change the station because of it
_____regularly listen _____request more _____other (list)______

Thanks! Tony DeMars

Thank you for taking a few minutes to answer the following questions.

None of the information collected will be identifiable to you individually.

For research purposes, we would like to know your interests and habits in listening to local radio stations.

PLACE AN 'X' IN ONE SPACE FOR EACH QUESTION

1. How many total hours a day would you say you listen to the radio?

_____less than 1 _____1-2 _____2-3 _____more than 3

2. What would you say is the one most important reason for you to listen to radio?

_____music
_____news
_____local information
_____contests
_____announcer(s)
_____other: (list reason)____________________

3. If you are listening to music on the radio and a talk show comes on about a local news item, what would be your most likely action?
_____listen briefly to judge interest in the topic
_____change the station immediately
_____listen to the program until it seems uninteresting
_____listen to the entire program

4. If you listen regularly to non-music information on the radio, check here _______ and, what do you listen to the most? (skip options if you did not check above)
_____sports talk
_____sports play by play
_____newscasts
_____talk programs
_____religious/inspirational discussion
_____other (list)____________________

5. What would you say is the one BEST thing about local radio stations?
_____style of music played
_____involvement with the community
_____on-air announcers
_____ local information discussions
_____debates on important topics
_____other (list)________________

6. What would you say is the one WORST thing about local radio stations?
_____style of music played
_____involvement with the community
_____on-air announcers
_____local information discussions
_____debates on important topics
_____other (list)________________

7. List your one favorite local radio station, by call letters, name, or frequency:

____

8. Which of these take up more of your leisure time and interest than the others:
_____listening to radio _____watching TV _____playing video games
_____going to live events (including clubs, movies, concerts)

9. Your age range: ___under 18 ___18-24 ____25-29 _____30-34 _____ 35+

10. Your race: ____ African American ____ Hispanic ____ Asian ____ American Indian
_____White _____ Other (list) ____________________
If mixed race, please mark the two dominant races by which you most identify yourself

When Schools Fail to Act Ethically:

The Vital Role of Civic Journalism

by

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Abstract

In summer 2001, a small town in Illinois experienced an incomprehensible series of traumas, thrust into the center of a national crisis involving toxic mold contamination, an infected school, and an intractable school board. Assertive coverage by the local press not only provided substantial investigative reporting, but gave voice to an oppressed public. Written from personal experience, this research narrative documents the vital role of civic journalism in promoting good citizenship when public servants fail.

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Introduction

In the summer of 2001, a small town in Illinois found itself in the midst of an incomprehensible series of traumas, thrust into the center of a national crisis involving toxic mold contamination, an infected school, and an intractable school board. Assertive coverage by the local press not only provided substantial investigative reporting, but also gave voice to an oppressed public. As a parent of middle and high school-age children in this community, and as a graduate student myself, I became personally involved with this micro-tragedy from two perspectives, as a victim and as an ethics critic. Due to my observation and participation, I experienced the vital role of civic journalism in a typical American town and its ability to promote good citizenship when public servants fail to serve democratically through ethically questionable conduct.

In this critical essay, I will detail one school district's experience with its officials, the community discordance and victimization that resulted from school board actions and decisions, and the facilitating role played by the local press in empowering a minority and enriching participation in the public sphere.[1.] My intent is to take ethical perspectives to evaluate the communication policies of the school board that effectively neutralized its constituency's voice during a time of crisis. My aim is to then document how involvement by the local press provided a voice for the repressed and a catalyst for change. First, I will review the literature on civic journalism. I will then highlight the circumstances that led to the school crisis in summer 2001. Next, I will review the official standards the school board is obligated to follow. I will then assess specific instances and rhetoric where the board failed to uphold these standards with morally questionable conduct, language, and decision making. Within this timeline, I will identify three significant windows of illumination, when local press coverage effectively served the community to stimulate deliberation, build understanding, and give voice to alternative viewpoints, and as a consequence helped to lead its community through this period of crisis.

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Literature Review

Civic Journalism

Since 1990 when the first acknowledged exercise of planned public journalism appeared in the *Wichita Eagle* (Merritt and Rosen 54), local newspapers across the nation have embraced this journalistic responsibility. Merritt's achievement at the *Eagle* was to aggressively report the 1990 campaign with in-depth treatment of issues, resulting in campaign coverage reform. Lambeth has since defined public journalism as journalism that listens to the stories and ideas of citizens and that provides alternative frames on important community issues, frames that stimulate citizen deliberation and build public understanding of issues. It also advances public knowledge of solutions and values served by alternative courses of action (Lambeth 17). In this sense, the two daily local newspapers in this essay, *The Daily Herald* and the *Kane County Chronicle*, both "approached daily reality from the perspective of (their) readers" (Greider qtd in Lambeth 29). In doing so, they helped to stimulate and raise the quality of public deliberation by engaging in a forum in print that filled in for the absent public forum, denied to the community by the school board.

Local press and local issues play a significant role in establishing community integration, as cited by McLeod et al in their 1996 research. Community integration is another way of saying personal identification and involvement within a community, or good citizenship. "A basic tenet of democratic political theory is that a just and healthy society depends on the informed participation of its citizenry," notes McLeod et al (189). In another study, Friedland and McLeod maintained that local media "stimulate the flow of information through personal networks and thereby encourage both group discussion and individual reflection," (qtd in Mastin 116). In the case of St. Charles, not only did local reporters facilitate community response, likewise did newspaper management. *Kane County* Chronicle publisher Roger Coleman, through his consistent participation in meetings and events surrounding the school crisis, virtually modeled good citizenship within the community.

Public Education System

Inherent in the public school system throughout the United States is regulation by a local school board within each school district. In her essay, "The Changing Role of School Boards," Ellen Todras states that school boards, as the traditional linchpins of American educational governance, are encountering criticism from the very populations they attempt to represent. This censure is a nationwide trend, with state governments, superintendents, community members and parents experiencing a frustration with school boards that has reached crisis proportions. District size appears to be a significant factor: the areas most impacted are large urban and rural/suburban districts. Various academicians and educational policy institutes concur that the "greatest problem facing both rural and urban school boards is their tendency to micro-manage and become bogged down in minutiae" (Todras).

The National School Boards Association has deflected attacks on their performance, calling themselves scapegoats and stressing the inherent "all-American" fairness of their structure and role in representative governance (Todras). The Illinois School Board Association warns its rookie board members, "During the past four or five decades, prophets have arisen who declared that school boards were not competent to run the schools of a modern complex society," but then declares, "prophets come and go, but the school board remains" (Illinois Association of School Boards). Given my personal experience with a severe sick school crisis, exacerbated by a recalcitrant board, these words struck me. Could this self-important posturing by the boards' state leadership, as suggested by the preceding comments, impart or reflect a similar attitude within its membership? Are local school boards influenced to behave in a privileged manner, unreceptive to constructive criticism? Has the school board system of governance become a democratically-constipated body whose intent and conduct prohibits community input and consensus? It was with these questions and their ethical implications that I engaged in this inspection of the events occurring in summer 2001.

Background

St. Charles East High School is one of two high schools in sprawling Community Unit School District 303, located in Kane County, Illinois, on the far western edge of suburban Chicago. The town of St. Charles, scenically situated on the winding Fox River, has only approximately 28,000 residents, but its school district serves more than 50,000 due to incorporation of bordering rural areas. The high school is renowned statewide as an athletic powerhouse, setting a record in 1999 with seven state championships. Yet in March of 2001, as the 2,500 East students streamed out of their buildings to begin a one-week spring break, a crisis began to unfold. During that week, the school administration authorized an independent firm to conduct a thorough indoor environmental evaluation in response to persistent air quality complaints by staff members and parents, and a pending student lawsuit. What they found prompted the regional superintendent to close the school immediately and indefinitely and lead to a period of questionable ethics in the conduct and decision-making of the school board, resulting in widespread community trauma and a conscientious response from the local press.

As early as 1988, parents and staff members began complaining about the air quality within the school. For thirteen years the complaints grew in number and severity. And while the administrators and school board addressed many of the complaints with private and public environmental inspections, including the Illinois Department of Public Health and NIOSH, the inspectors' recommendations were insufficiently followed. Report after report ended with the same basic conclusions: increase outside air intake, remove water-damaged materials, find the water source that is causing mold and stop it (Meltzer).

A 1998 state report showed only modest improvement in the school's air quality and urged the district to investigate problem areas within the buildings. Also in 1998, a citizens' air-quality task force was developed to monitor the school's decisions; a building foreman was hired, to be replaced twice within two years; and various repairs and new inspections were conducted (Meltzer).

Finally, in March 2001, the board hired the firm of AAA Environmental to conduct further tests. AAA's investigation revealed the presence of toxic molds, aspergillus and stachybotrys, inside the walls of classrooms. Stachybotrys is a dark-colored fungi that thrives on water-damaged materials such as sheet rock, paper, ceiling tiles, insulation backing and wallpaper, and produces extremely toxic mycotoxins. Aspergillus flavus, which affects people with compromised immune systems, was found in several locations. It produces a mycotoxin, Aflotoxin B, that "is one of the most potent carcinogens known" (Aerotech). AAA recommended the school remain closed for an additional week for a more thorough examination. When the district superintendent, Francis Kostel, resisted this extension, the regional superintendent overruled his decision and officially closed the entire facility, which meant his approval would be required for reopening. It also meant that now all policy and operations decisions rested on the school board.

St. Charles East is one of two high schools in District 303. Its facilities were built in stages between 1973 and 1976, a time when energy conservation encouraged limited windows and tightly constructed buildings. Due to severe overcrowding and the projection of even faster future growth in the rural western section of the district, voters approved a referendum in 2000 to convert a newly-built middle school into a second high school, St. Charles North. It is a state-of-the-art facility, built to mirror, and at times exceed, the East side school academically, technologically, and athletically. It draws almost exclusively from neighborhoods with high home values, whereas the few low-income neighborhoods in the district all attend the East school. As is typical with new high schools, only freshmen and sophomores attended North's first year of operation, 2000-01; the following year it expanded to include juniors. Thus, when the East school was shut down due to mold contamination, the North school was running at only 60% capacity (C.U.S.D. 303).

The Crisis Situation

The preceding introduction to the East and North schools figures prominently into the immediate fate of the East students, and to the volatile school board sessions of summer 2001 which pitted the two school communities against each other and corralled the local press as mediator. In the weeks following East's closure, the school board forbade any entrance to the buildings, even to retrieve textbooks, backpacks, musical instruments, teaching plans, computer records, or gradebooks. Signs on all entrances read, "Warning: Unsafe Facility, Do Not Enter, Building Closed." Only AAA technicians, fully cloaked in white bio-hazard suits, entered the buildings to conduct experiments within each classroom. Network television remotes filmed them constantly, students eyed them with fascination, and we watched them and worried. From various media, we learned of the growing number of "sick" buildings and schools throughout the United States, and we realized that our hometown was now on that map.

Towards the end of the third week, anxiety had deeply set its roots within the community. Would our children suffer any serious, long-term health effects? Of immediate concern, when would the students return to school, and where? My freshman son Benjamin needed a solid first-year foundation. My daughter Johanna, a junior, faced the most critical time for college exams and any necessary G.P.A. resuscitation. And many of the students had already easily slipped into summer mode. The final solution came only days before it was put into place. The school board voted to relocate all students and teachers to the North high school. Classes resumed in early April, the third week of school closure for the East students. On a split morning/afternoon schedule, the two schools shared the facility, providing each student body with four hours of instruction time daily (Fabre). This disruption provoked animosity and bitterness in the host North school. Many of the East students and faculty were made to feel unwelcome. Demeaning language addressed the visitors. Supplies and chairs disappeared on a daily basis. A community that shared a single identity just two years' earlier was now split into two adversarial sides.

In June, AAA's final report on the shuttered East school was presented to the community and it was damning: The firm uncovered high mold growth behind walls and within ceilings, underneath floors, and in upholstered chairs throughout the campus' buildings. AAA also diagnosed lead in the drinking water, and bacteria and endotoxins in the spray-applied fireproofing that, through age and neglect, had been allowed to disperse through the ventilation system, coated with mold and bacterial colonies. It was obvious that many of the repairs prescribed throughout the years were done only halfway or not at all. In science rooms, microscopes were covered with fuzzy white mold due to neglected water damage. On ceilings, tiles were discovered to have been painted over to cover water stains, and the leaks were never repaired. The list of problems was extensive, and AAA made explicit recommendations on remediation (Meltzer). The small group of watchdog citizens and staff members who had lobbied on behalf of the school's air quality for years finally felt some vindication. As a parent of two children attending the school, I was horrified that the community had been lied to by its "care-givers."

The first window: Press reports from the frontline.

In a move unauthorized and unsupported by district officials, the regional superintendent exercised the test of publicity by inviting a handful of citizens, including a single member of the press, for a personal tour of the shuttered school building. The following day, the cover story by this prominent columnist from the *Daily Herald* effectively turned around community and local press sentiment. Stunned at the severity of the situation, the columnist, who had been an outspoken supporter of the district, now detailed a "long, sad list of what's wrong at St. Charles East" (Page [2]). His report acted as a catalyst to increase watchdog involvement and activism among citizens, and also prompted competing reporters to join together in supportive collaboration over the months ahead to get the facts and tell the stories.

Kane County Chronicle publisher Roger Coleman told me, "…we gave (our reporters) a great deal of latitude in pursuing every side of the story, and even pushed them to, but we did not encourage them to take a side or become part of the story. That said, reporters are intelligent human beings and are supposed to be able to 'sniff out' a story. If they are good at this, then they are also going to be able to 'sniff out' where a story 'smells'. When this happens they are going to take that route and look for facts where somebody is probably trying to hide some of them. Now they are no longer just 'covering the story' but are passionately involved in trying to contribute to the common good of the community…thus entering into civic journalism. That's what makes the job rewarding!"

Page detailed the dirt-clogged air filters, varnished-over molded wood, broken sinks with constantly running water, standing water under kitchen floors, and loose duct-work in the Macintosh lab which allowed force of air to loosen and spray mold-covered insulation particles throughout the lab and library. In the newly-opened walls, he observed insulation that was installed backwards and even areas filled with construction trash—wrappers, wood pieces, floor sweepings—substituted when the builders apparently ran out of insulation years ago. There had been no project manager from the district who oversaw construction.

By June, a second student lawsuit and a class action suit were filed. The crisis situation was well underway, and reflection on failure to uphold past responsibilities was not yet publicly addressed: Everyone realized that crucial decisions must be made relatively quickly. However, it was common knowledge the school board had been the decision-maker on much of the previous work. They failed in their direct role by contributing to the circumstance, "something they (did had) contributed to the need for care," and this was their responsibility (Tronto, 132).

It was with this distressful management history and damaged community confidence in its leaders that a series of emergency school board meetings were held mid-summer to decide the fate of the district's school buildings and how to accommodate the students in the fall. At this point, it is important to clarify the ruling hierarchy. The school board is the top of the educational power pyramid. Local school board control goes back to our country's early pilgrim school houses. The board is comprised of seven citizens who are publicly elected for four-year terms. There are no qualifications. Once elected, they hire or rehire the district superintendent, all administrators, teachers, and staff, and oversee their policies and performance in all school district matters including expenditures. For such a critical responsibility to assure the quality education of a community's children, the Illinois Association of School Boards has adopted a 12-point Code of Conduct. Two points in particular will be challenged in the remainder of this essay: First, the board members shall represent all school district constituents honestly and equally and refuse to surrender their responsibilities to special interest groups. Second, board members should encourage and respect the free expression of opinion of fellow board members and others who seek a hearing before the board (Illinois Association of School Boards). Rather than adhere to these standards, I will illustrate that they asserted a group privilege for discussions and decision-making regardless of counter opinion. Stanley Aronowitz captures the champion/victim relationship they created: "those at the pinnacle are able to impose a *logic of* *domination* on the rest...by simply repeating their falsehoods through every avenue of public debate and discourse" (Aronowitz 5).

The individual who headed East high school as principal throughout most of its years of neglect, Francis Kostel, was now the district superintendent. As mandated, he sat alongside the board at all meetings, wielding influence with this body empowered to solve the current crisis. Relatively few administrators have been trained to deal with conflicts (Beck and Murphy), and Kostel, along with the board, proved to be no exceptions. Their undemocratic use of power was painfully evident, despite the fact that ethics experts caution leaders to use their power with restraint, since it always holds the potential for treating others as less than human (Lashway).

In response to the AAA report, one of the first actions Kostel and the board took was to position a team of paid experts to review the document and report on its accuracy. The board's decade-long habit of overlooking study results, or insufficiently addressing them, now manifested itself with attempts to destroy the credibility of AAA, the entity that had finally won the community's trust. More problematic, James Woods, one of the paid experts hired by the board to refute the AAA report, had already been hired to help defend the district against the two class-action lawsuits. The *Daily Herald* devoted a prominent editorial, "Don't Kill School Messenger," to voicing community concerns over this public diminishment of AAA's findings.

Thus began a series of emergency board meetings, and what appeared to be a systematic evasion and belittlement of community voice and opposition. In accordance with the Illinois Open Meetings Act, the public must have access to all board meetings when three or more members are together discussing school matters, and the customary format allowed for the public to make comments only at the end of the meeting, with each speaker receiving a time limitation. During many of these emergency summer meetings, the board members held lengthy dialogues and presentations among themselves, often running for three hours and exhausting the patience and ability of many audience members to remain late into the weekday nights for the public comment portion. Considering the basic values of representative democracy, here ethics are suspect in that the audience participants were not enjoying access to channels of public communication, nor the ability to present alternatives (Johannesen 23). To present their concerns, East teachers sat in the rear of meetings with poster-sized "index cards" asking questions that were not being asked, or answered, in the body of the meeting. These signs read, "Why change 'experts' in midstream?" and "Where's the (citizens') Task Force?" The *Kane County Chronicle* documented the saga of the unheard by reprinting photographs of these signs over a period of two months (Walter, "Emotions erupt" and "AAA report attacked"). Coleman describes his paper's coverage, "We were able to give a louder voice to the perceived 'trouble-makers' that had been ignored for so many years, allowing the problem to persist and grow... We wanted the oppressed and 'little people' to have their story be told. (Our photographs) showed the community the people who were passionate in this particular struggle as well as what (and who) they believed to be the real problems."

Indeed, while the school board meetings appeared to offer face-to-face communication and an opportunity for open discourse between citizens and policy makers, there often was not genuine communication. According to Jurgen Habermas' discourse ethic, speech should be appropriate, suitable to and reflective of the generalizable interests of the participants" (Cooper 32). What was allowed to be spoken reflected agreement with the administration. The audience of citizens, many of whom had come to be heard (or to hear an alternative viewpoint), became paralyzed participants, effectively diminished by disregard. Of Habermas' four constituent elements of the "ideal speech situation," at least two were neglected in this situation: audience members were not granted equal opportunity to initiate communicative acts, and they were denied equal opportunity to present arguments (Johannesen 45). Each person wishing to speak was required to sign up at the beginning of the meeting, and at the very end, the board president granted more time for some than others, depending on their point of view. The president would not allow those further down on the list to concede their time to the cut-off speaker, and occasionally deliberately bypassed names. According to Habermas, these public discussions are illegitimate because they "rely on power or privilege or on the suppression of the discourse" (Van Hooft qtd. in Cooper 33). When publicly criticized, the board claimed their public comments time slot fulfilled their obligation. This posturing to appear to provide a true community forum was a deceit. Alison Brown describes "dissembling" as a putting on a false front when in reality one is ignoring or shutting down possible avenues of knowledge. "...To willfully disregard a body of thought is much worse than to be merely ignorant of it. It becomes worse because it violates what many have seen as a primary moral obligation" (Brown 51).

The second window: Reporters tutor history and science.

The district continued to further deny community, teacher, and staff involvement. "St. Charles East mold task force excludes teachers," the *Chicago Tribune* reported on June 8:

> Officials for St. Charles District 303 turned down a request from the Illinois Education Association to have a representative monitor conversations among experts trying to decide the best way to fight mold and other environmental problems at (the school) ... a negotiator for the Association said earlier that teachers and staff need reassurance. "They have proven that what was done over the last 13 years was not adequate," he said. "The question is, 'What will happen this time and why should this be any different?' But if we hear the debate, it will mean that people will (understand) and feel safe"... School officials said it would not be practical to include non-scientists in discussions ... "It does not make sense to have someone who is not a scientist sit and watch what's happening on that panel," said board member Sandra Wright.

Ethical theorist De George offers, "The claim might be made that the subject is technical and best left to the technicians, but ... any choice of levels involves value judgments and there is little reason to assume that technicians represent or hold the same values as even the majority ... As rational agents, people have a right to decide issues that directly concern and affect them" (185). It seems like common sense, but power does strange things to rational thinking. As Michel Foucault theorizes, the

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excesses of power produce harmful effects. Lorraine Code, influenced by Foucault, states, "... there is power inherent in knowledge, a power that can be exercised over those who do not know...in totalitarian societies (it's called) controlled ignorance" (Cooper 36). By guarding their knowledge from the citizens, the ruling body of school board members and administrators are effectively rendering them powerless. For just as people have a right not to be harmed, they have a right to know when they are being put at risk of harm (De George 182). And the level of acceptable risk should be determined by an informed public through the process of inclusion. A distanced public, wrongfully separated from something to which they should be united, is alienated (De George 140) and psychologically wounded. Sissela Bok's perspective of the deceived can help explain the feelings of those teachers: "... those who have been lied to in an important matter...are resentful, disappointed, and suspicious. They feel wronged; they are wary of new overtures" (20).

As a counter force to this alienation and deceit, the local press provided the inclusion not offered by the district through acknowledging community concerns and educating with information. The *Daily Herald* observed, "When AAA Environmental found potentially dangerous mold in some classrooms at St. Charles East…it was the first time many parents ever had heard of problems (although) five groups had examined the school before AAA came to town." I was one of those parents, blissfully naïve because the school so prominently promoted its academic and athletic stature. The *Daily Herald* compiled a 28-year timeline of the school's history of construction, health complaints, inspections, repair efforts, and ignored recommendations. The paper also explained all the mold terminology (Meltzer). The health complaints began in 1988 identifying asthma problems, and then progressed to headaches, dizziness, fainting, bloody noses, immune system disorders and cancers. As far back as 1994, the school was evacuated due to poor air quality and 31 students and staff members were hospitalized with reactions. In 1998, an article on sick schools in *Good Housekeeping* magazine featured St. Charles East students and teachers (Brooks). What at first seemed difficult to believe, that my children's school was dangerous and its leadership deceitful, now became a grim reality. We turned to the two local newspapers habitually each morning with respect for what we considered the truth: testimony from our parent activists and our teachers, and full coverage of *all* sides by dedicated young reporters. "We stimulated deliberation and built greater understanding by our persistent attempts to find out everything that was happening beneath the surface (no pun intended)," states Coleman. " I think we helped get both sides of the issue in front of our readers, but most importantly, I believe that we were able to uncover many things that the school district tried to hide."

Soon afterwards, Pamela Smith, AAA President, revealed that during the initial testing in March, school maintenance crews were cleaning ahead of them, scrubbing floors and painting walls before AAA could test a room (Fabre and Meltzer). Smith recalled a meeting with administration officials that she and her partner were urgently requested to attend on April 13. They were left alone with the district's attorney and James Wood, head of the district's panel of experts as well as the person hired to help defend a lawsuit filed against the district. Woods told them to stop testing for mold. The attorney told them not to speak with anyone other than the administration: not the press, not the parents, not even the regional superintendent. He said, "*We* are the experts. We will convince the community that it is safe" (Fabre and Meltzer).

Now AAA, along with the community, had become the "other," the enemy. The administration became the polemicist, "abolishing the partner rather than recognizing him (them) as a subject with a right to speak" (Cooper 41). And not only keeping the knowledge to themselves, but manufacturing the knowledge to suit their means. This intent could be concluded from the attorney's comment.

It must also be noted that the board was not entirely in unison. One board member often chose to speak for the community; but was denied "significant voice" through motions by other members to move to another discussion item, rush to a vote, or table discussion. This habitual tendency to stifle his comments, his verbal vote, weakened the integrity of their decisions. Jaksa and Pritchard suggest that by not allowing significant voice robs group participants not only of their right to meaningful discussion, but also decreases the likelihood the group will make morally acceptable decisions (147). Sissela Bok cautions that "in professional and powerful circles, where those who might object are not given a voice, and where those considered 'wise' can be those most likely to agree..." (97) the situation calls for the test of publicity, a public hearing of the less powerful groups' points of view. As well, asserts Bok, reasonable people from outside of the situation should weigh the potential harms. But try as they did to enlist themselves into the board's inner circle, volunteers including the city mayor and local clergy members heard their offers declined.

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The most pressing issue, deciding where to place the East students in the fall, met with a wide range of suggestions. However, a contingency committee of parents, students, teachers and administrators eliminated any option of uprooting middle school students, and the board agreed. Within weeks, however, the board chose to disregard the committee's leading solution of placing all high school students together on a split schedule at the partially vacant North campus. In a late night vote, unannounced as part of the evening's agenda, the board majority decided to move a middle school of 1,200 students onto a field outfitted entirely with mobile classrooms using outdoor hallways, thus freeing their building for the East students. Of the district's three middle schools, the board chose the one school that solely feeds into East high school. The board stated they reversed their promise to leave middle schools unaffected because of the overriding need for both high schools to retain their individual "cultures." I felt this odd because the North school had only been open for one year and one-third of its students had begun at East. In fact, many of us felt this really meant the school board did not want to acknowledge nor deal with the inflexibility of North high school's administration and staff to ease the progress of a shared school. Every social arrangement benefits some people at the expense of others (Starratt 185-202). In this case, the North students benefited the most. They were left alone in a spacious and well-equipped new school, while the East students were placed in a building too small for their numbers, which offered limited technology, athletics, and academic resources. The eleven- and twelve-year-old middle school students bore the full expense in their trailer park. Schools are supposed to be dedicated to the well-being of children, yet these students had virtually no voice in what happened here (Greenfield). For (this) reason alone, the leaders' conduct should have been "deliberately moral." (Lashway) Were their actions moral? With their decision, the board chose to place middle school children in a disadvantaged situation for an entire year—leaving two other middle schools "advantaged"—and to fit all the East students into the small middle school with limited resources, leaving North at 60% occupancy with full educational resources. Many in the community felt the "deliberately moral" solution would have been to reconfigure both high school populations to share one campus and receive equal academic opportunity. I certainly did: my younger two children, Nick and Maggie, now would be spending their entire sixth and eighth grade years in a high-stressed, crisis situation of an emergency mobile school, to be erected, furnished, staffed and running within six

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weeks. Many in the community also felt the shared high school solution would have been more fiscally responsible rather than the temporary establishment of an entire mobile middle school as well as the addition of 17 overflow mobile units for the high school students. Throughout previous years of inadequate maintenance and poor follow-through on recommendations, the school board's fiscal irresponsibility had become a major public concern.

The third window: The press speaks for the silenced.

Many embittered community members continued to attend board meetings, now to express their interest in rebuilding versus repairing the East high school. Given the age of the building, its long list of structural and maintenance problems, and the gravely diminished stature of the school board as overseer, many residents felt this was an opportunity to finally secure a safe environment, and one that was fairly comparable to the North building. And with the previous board decision to erect mobile encampments, students would have already been displaced, allowing an opportunity for rebuilding. The board repeatedly labeled this effort a "want, not a need." A cost analysis conducted by the board showed questionably low figures for the repair option.

"Facing an angry mob of parents," the *Kane County Chronicle* reported of a September 10th meeting, "the (board) interrupted its regular meeting Monday, apparently to call the police." The newspaper tells the story the district did not want to hear. As one parent emotionally pleaded with the board to consider fully exploring the costs of rebuilding the school against repairing, only a $9 million difference according to her calculations, a board member called for early adjournment. Many board members and administrators left the room, and a phone call to the police reported a mob action in progress. With board members outside the room, another parent used the microphone to show the audience large photographs of mold-covered shipping boxes from East that had been moved to the middle school. The same company which had shipped these boxes was now currently employed in the East buildings in another cleaning capacity. Superintendent Kostel stepped back in and shut off the sound system. Johannesen holds that dialogic attitudes may be applicable...in public communication (67). In this particular case, tolerance of presentation of reasons by others and openness to scrutiny by others are both ethical standards that seem to have been ignored.

Although the board decided to return and continue their meeting after a five minute absence, one board member warned that if residents could not control themselves, the board would dispense with citizens' comments while they conducted the remainder of their business. Here, focus is on the board's monologic agenda, not on the audience's real needs, and the board is impervious to any influence (Johannesen 61). Not a surprising tactic, given their history; and perhaps the most surprising aspect of the ongoing crisis was the consolidated and untiring efforts of the activist community to be heard in the face of constant refusal.

As stated earlier, the board failed to uphold certain recommended standards in its Code of Conduct. "Violating rules (standards) can be considered immoral whenever people, by their actions, intentionally provide an unfair advantage over other people with whom the organization or its members compete or interact" (Thomas 30). Parents, teachers, staff members, even courageous students who detailed their physical problems before large crowds, all asked for and initially expected a fair hearing. When fairness was abandoned, there simply was no higher authority to turn to. "The agency that holds the moral expectations is particularly important because that agency is the entity responsible for determining guilt, setting sanctions, and implementing the sanctions. The authority for actually assigning sanctions is held by agents within the particular group whose moral standards have been breached." Thomas suggests (36) that people outside the jurisdiction of the group can influence by public outcry. But if the outcry is muted, called into question or ridiculed, the attempt at influence is impotent.

Although some citizens were permitted to comment later in this tumultuous meeting, at the end of the long evening the board did, in fact, vote to repair rather than rebuild. This was a decision that many in the community felt was rushed and not representative of the majority (Walter, "Board Faces Rowdy Crowd."). Coleman cites the *Kane County Chronicle* 's story giving voice to the meeting's outcasts as a clear example of civic journalism. "It was the right of the parents to respond and state what they thought of the school board's actions regarding the health of all concerned and how their taxes were being spent. It was our duty and responsibility to provide the forum for this debate in a free and open society. To not give this account would have made us as guilty of controlling and censoring the parents, as the school board."

Through brute force, the attendees were effectively transformed from participants into consumers. Aronowitz laments the loss of public involvement and communication in recent years due to an elitist and technical rationality that excludes many from participating in an "open society" they understand and find accessible (Lucaites qtd. in Cooper 29). This broadens my concern for those residents who did not attend meetings nor assert their right to dialogue, but nevertheless were disenfranchised by the process. For some people, the scientific terminology, the mold-speak, and the meetings' cumbersome mechanics (and clashes) were off-putting. Aronowitz has written that participatory alienation, when it affects citizens, prompts them to find community in the marketplace and transforms them into consumers (Aronowitz qtd. in Cooper 29). The St. Charles citizens were forced into this role when denied participation as stakeholders. Yet even as consumers, ultimately they are disadvantaged. The marketplace is controlled by the school board, there is no choice within the public school system, necessity to educate their children drives their consumption, and the product is a dangerously constructed and questionably repaired 30-year old school building. Of course, the end consumers are their children. And my questions on the whole dynamic of school board rule were answered: The state board's self-important posturing has trickled down to the local level, where it has been mastered.

Conclusion

The culminating struggle between this small American town and its negligent, autocratic school district occurred on the evening of September 10, 2001, and we awoke the next morning to that unimaginable horror of enormous scale. Over the following months we felt our security and stature as U.S. citizens diminish as we stoically sent our children to school in make-shift encampments and crowded temporary hallways and classrooms. Some of us had considered home schooling, alternative or private schools, and even withholding fees—pretty impractical for many tight-budgeted, dual working parents who needed a public school. We placed our hopes in the close friendships of the children and faith in their teachers. Due to poor drainage for rainwater amidst their tangle of outdoor walkways, the middle schoolers took to wearing T-shirts reading "Mobile Bay Water Polo Team." Many of the high school students developed a premature "nine-to-five" disengagement. Yet despite the different world, in the larger sense and within the boundaries of our town, a more familiar relationship with our daily newspaper had transformed the way we functioned as citizens, neighbors and parents. It offered not only information, but diverse viewpoints, dialogue, and reflection: the vital role of civic journalism.

One year later, when the actual cost of repair far exceeded the earlier estimate to rebuild, a school funding referendum was soundly defeated. That subsequent April saw the election of two new school board members who represented alternative viewpoints to incumbent members—in fact, one was a leading activist during the mold crisis. "I do believe that many individuals learned through (the mold crises) that you can affect and alter processes through public debate and personal involvement," notes Coleman. "After all, nothing had happened for many years despite persistent complaints by students, parents and teachers. Then a select few finally got fed up and refused to be part of the apathy and/or reluctance of past and current school boards and administrations to address a possible health threatening situation." And their local paper told their story.

As a parent and community member, it is reassuring to know that my local newspapers respect and share my interests and concerns. Their involvement and coverage of the school crisis was certainly a step in the right direction to building community integration, not to mention more regular readership. It is my hope that narrative essays such as this will encourage future journalists to become aware of the ethical value of their work, and to realize the consequences of their local reporting and its impact on community well-being. And that they will be influenced to adopt pro-active and critical standpoints to secure a future where all voices are heard.

NOTES:

1. This essay is best read as an *autoethnography*. Also referred to as alternative, postmodern, or new ethnography, *autoethnography* is an experimental research narrative that utilizes textual analysis. Its methodological approach examines personal experience in a world in which the lines between fact and fiction often seem confusing, unclear or unreliable (Neumann 173, 192). Neumann has written that *autoethnography* embraces the ethnographic impulse that looks outward with the autobiographical impulse that gazes

inward. While with *ethnographic* texts, "what is left in and what is left out, whose point of view is represented, how scenes of social life are depicted" are very important matters, *autoethnography* focuses directly on the experience of the researcher in order to unpack social and political significance (Lindlof & Taylor 17, 289). Whereas Ellis and Bochner identify 36 variants of the term *autoethnography,* Van Maanen's 1988 typology of the "critical tale" genre in experimental writing perhaps best describes this author's work: that which is morally concerned with depicting social structure from the perspective of disadvantaged groups and with addressing inequalities in the interest of achieving greater social, political and economic justice" (Lindlof & Taylor 288, 289). Emerging consensus has identified the following evaluative criteria: Autoethnographies should be well written narratives; engage readers emotionally and intellectually by evoking shared experiences, interests, and frames of reference; address multiple audiences; and be credible, ethically accountable, and generalizable (Lindlof & Taylor 292).

2. I owe my husband, Bill Page, a *Daily Herald* columnist during this period, acknowledgement for helping to build my awareness of the conflict at its beginning stages. Thus I was able to fully experience, with a combination of disbelief, shock and anger, the evolving hegemonic actions of the school board, its impact on the community, and the facilitating role of the local press.

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Civic Journalism and Objectivity:
A Philosophical Resuscitation

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ABSTRACT

Civic Journalism and Objectivity: A Philosophical Resuscitation

The purpose of this paper is to show that civic journalism – however much it rejects the traditional views of objectivity – still requires the concepts of ontological and epistemic objectivity because those ideas are essential for the possibility of communication and truth in journalism. Building on arguments from Nicholas Rescher, this paper restates the case for objectivity and replies to its critics.

Civic Journalism and Objectivity: A Philosophical Resuscitation

A philosopher remarked in 1987 that he was "staggered" by the state of journalistic ignorance of the philosophical literature on objectivity.[1] This same thinker also observed that if journalists had paid some attention to philosophy, they might not have given up so quickly on objectivity.[2] This study seeks to restate the case for objectivity from a philosophical perspective inspired by Nicholas Rescher's work, *Objectivity: The Obligations of Impersonal Reason.*[3] The aim is not to rehash the "hoary" journalistic arguments pro and con,[4] but to resuscitate the importance of the idea of objectivity for journalism, especially civic journalism.[5] Resuscitating an idea is, of course, only a first step in rehabilitating the concept for useful work. But it is a necessary step, for without a vital concept of objectivity the cause of truth in journalism is doomed.

Given that objectivity is, in the words of the historian Novick, a "...sprawling collection of assumptions, attitudes, aspirations and antipathies"[6] it will help to begin by isolating three distinct notions of objectivity that are particularly important for an understanding of journalistic work. These are:

(a) psychological objectivity or detachment, which deals with the individual journalist's emotional distance or partisan neutrality;

(b) epistemic or cognitive objectivity, which addresses the justification or warrant for the factual assertions and knowledge claims in, and for, news stories; and

(c) ontological objectivity, which pertains to the reality or nature of the events reported as news.

Objectivity as detachment

Journalists sometimes misunderstand "detachment" as emotional indifference, neutrality or aloofness. Merritt, for example, denounces "total detachment" as the view that "...the ultimate job of the journalist is to sit on a mountain watching the end of the world and our only obligation is to get the date and time right."[7] Merritt contrasts this "total detachment" view of objectivity with "seeing facts in the cold light of day; with fairness and balance; with leaving biases out of our judgments insofar as possible; with intellectual honesty; with all of those traditional canons. They are Good Things and to be rigorously sought after and applied."[8]

Psychological objectivity as these "Good Things" is the view that journalists should keep their own biases and partisan loyalties out of their stories; it does not demand neutrality, just that partisan interests are kept in check. Hence, such objectivity is also often explained in terms of an ethical imperative to be fair and balanced. Detachment can be thought of as "objective" because detachment in this more moderate sense simply rules out the subjectively idiosyncratic and arbitrary.

This is an important point because subjectivity, by itself, is not the antonym of objectivity. The counterpoint of objectivity, Rescher emphasizes, is an "indulgence of potentially idiosyncratic subjectivity."[9] What this means is that subjectivity *by itself* does not necessarily vitiate objectivity. The mere fact that reporters have feelings about the events they cover does not entail that their accounts cannot be objective. The objectivity of their stories would be in jeopardy only if they allowed personal idiosyncrasies, partisan interests, parochialisms, or arbitrary preferences to influence or determine their news judgments.

Ontological objectivity

Ontological objectivity is at issue when the question is asked whether there is anything "out there" to be objective about.[10] In the case of journalism, it is the question of whether news exists in the "world outside" as Kovach and Rosentiel put it.[11] Glasser maintains that the "essence" of journalistic objectivity is the belief that the news happens "out there" and that the journalists are, therefore, not responsible for "it."[12]

Epistemic objectivity

Epistemic or cognitive objectivity in journalism, on the other hand, addresses the warrant for knowledge claims or factual assertions in the news stories journalists publish or broadcast. It is at this epistemic level that journalistic objectivity is often equated with truth, for the primary "warrant" of factual claims in news stories (as well as the story as a whole) is that they are true. Lichtenberg addresses this connection between objectivity and truth in her apt summation of what it is at issue in this matter:

> Our most fundamental interest in objectivity is an interest in truth. We want to know how things stand in the world, or what happens, and why. In this sense, to claim that a particular piece of journalism is *not* objective is to claim that it fails to provide the truth or the whole truth. In addition, to deny that objectivity is *possible* is at least to deny that there is any way of getting at the truth….
>
> To doubt that objectivity is possible, then, is to doubt that we can know how things really are or what really happens, where 'really' means something like 'independently of our own perspective.'[13]

Lichtenberg's "core concept" of objectivity is that it is a heuristic idea we cannot do without if we want to talk about truth. Her view is consistent with that of Rescher, to whose philosophical analysis of objectivity we now turn.

Rescher's analysis of objectivity

Rescher explains that ontological objectivity deals with the distinction between "real things" and what is "somehow ideational and mind-bound."(4)[14] Epistemic objectivity, on the other hand, is about the reasons or justifications of claims and contrasted with the egocentric, arbitrary and parochial. "Epistemic objectivity is thus tantamount to rational appropriateness,"(6) he concludes. There is room in epistemic objectivity for emotions and personal values, but no place for "an indulgence of potentially idiosyncratic subjectivity." (6) Cognitive objectivity does not deny the subjective reality of experience. What is important to objectivity is that our accounts of experience possess a "universality of access, of being within reach of all." (6)

He defines cognitive objectivity following the idea of invariance in physics:

> Physicists see objectivity as a matter of the invariance of results under changes of an observer-correlative coordinate system. Analogously, we may regard cognitive

> objectivity in general as a matter of an invariance of result under changes of a opinion-correlative system of personal or communally held prejudices, preferences, biases, or the like." (6-7)[15]

Or, again, "Objectivity, then, is a matter of universality (or at least generality) of recognition access, unrestricted availability to the community of standard respondents – in the cognitive case rational thinkers, in the photographic case normal observers."(7) Rescher notes that one way to achieve objectivity is "to put oneself in another's place."(7)[16]

Rescher distinguishes his position from the universality of a "view from nowhere" [17] or "God's vantage point." "Objectivity is a matter of how we *should* – and how otherwise reasonable people *would* – proceed if they were in our shoes in the relevant regards. It is a matter of doing not what is impossible but what is appropriate."(8) The appropriate "detachment" that objectivity demands is the detachment from what is personally idiosyncratic or whimsical; it is the detachment that allows one to "'give an account'…on whose basis others can see that 'it is only right and proper' for him to resolve the issue in that way."(9) Detachment here again simply means putting oneself in the other's shoes as a sensible person.(9)

Objectivity and rationality

"Objectivity pivots on rationality"(9), Rescher emphasizes. The universality of reason, furthermore, is universally conditioned by what he calls circumstantiality and urbanity. Circumstantiality relativizes the universality of reason and objectivity to the point that "different people judge issues the same way *in the same circumstances*."(11) Urbanity relativizes rationality to the agent's "available experience, including that of other individuals and cultures in so far as this is vicariously accessible." (12) Rescher stresses that circumstantiality and urbanity do not justify a "do- as-you-please 'relativism'"(12) but simply underscore the fact that rationality is circumstantially universal.[18]

Given that cognitive objectivity entails accounts of experience that are "universally accessible" or "what any normal observer would see," Rescher describes an objective cognitive judgment as

> …. one that abstracts from personal idiosyncrasies or group parochialisms. It is a judgment made without the influence of individual or communal preferences or predilections, a judgment in line with generic standards of rationality that can plausibly be seen as abstracting from the personal or communal inclinations or allegiances. Objective judgments are those that have a cogency compelling for everyone alike (or at least all normal and sensible people), independently of idiosyncratic tendencies and inclinations. (7)[19]

And he sums up his view as follows:

> To proceed objectively is, in sum, to render oneself perspicuous to others by doing what any reasonable and normally constituted person would do in one's place, thereby rendering one's proceedings intelligible to anyone. When the members of a group are objective, they secure great advantage thereby: they lay the groundwork for community by paving the way for mutual understanding, communication, and collaboration. And in cognitive matters they also sideline sources of error. For the essence of objectivity lies in its factoring out of one's deliberations personal predilections, prejudices, idiosyncrasies, and the like that would stand in the way of intelligent people's reaching the same result. Objectivity follows in rationality's wake because of its effectiveness as a means of averting both isolation and error. (18)

Cognitive objectivity understood as judging the way "any reasonable and normally constituted person would" also clears the way for journalists to accept this concept in their work. What cognitive objectivity demands is desirable, possible and achievable. In telling their stories, journalists need to factor out prejudice, bias, and idiosyncrasies. Journalists need to see the world as any rational person in the same circumstances and with the same knowledge would see it. Rationality itself thus yields the concept of cognitive objectivity journalists need to make meaningful communication of news possible.[20]

Rescher defends these notions of objectivity against eight common attacks. The eight objections Rescher considers come from anthropologists, historians, sociologists, personalists, feminists, Marxists, post-modernists and social activists.

Objection from anthropology

The first objection is anthropological relativism, which attacks the rationality standard of objectivity. It is the view that "... there are no historically and culturally invariant principles of reason.... people's (altogether plausible) views about what rationality is change with changes in place and time." (26)

Rescher replies that this objection conflates the "process and product" of rationality. The objection rests on the "mistaken idea that different bodies of justified belief [product] require different concepts of what belief justification is all about. [process]"(31)[21] As an example, Rescher uses the argument of Peter Winch in his "Understanding a Primitive Society."[22] Winch argues that the Azande beliefs about witchcraft and oracles cannot be rejected as irrational even though they violate the scientific standards of a scientific culture. Winch says the Azande can rationally see those beliefs as justified in their system. Rescher rebuts this argument by noting:

> The answer you get depends on the question you ask. If we ask `Do they hold their beliefs rationally?' we, of course, mean *rationally* on our understanding of the matter. And the answer here is clearly `No,' because in fact this sort of rationality does not figure in *their* thinking at all. The fact that they (presumably) deem their beliefs somehow `justified' by some considerations or other that they see as appropriate is going to cut no ice in *our* deliberations regarding the cogency of those beliefs."(27)[23]

Rescher demonstrates the "lamentably loose thinking" of anthropological relativism by drawing attention to the following sentences, where the ellipses can stand for any assertion or belief statement:

(1) The Wazonga habitually (customarily) attribute ...
(2) The Wazonga think it acceptable (or perhaps even necessary) to attribute...
(3) The Wazonga think it rationally mandatory to attribute....

Rescher notes that while (1) and (2) are acceptable, but the third is as absurd as asserting that

(4) The Wazonga think it is *mathematically* true that dogs have tails.

Rescher's point is that the Wazonga no more have a conception of what is "rationally mandatory" than what is "mathematically true," for these are our notions, not theirs. (28)

> The case is much like that of saying that the tribe whose counting practices are based on the sequences `one, two, many' has a different arithmetic from ourselves. To do anything like justice to the facts one would have to say that they do not have *arithmetic* at all – just a peculiar and very rudimentary way of counting. And similarly with the Wazonga. On the given evidence, they do not have a *different* concept of rationality; rather, their culture has not developed to the stage where they have *any* conception of rationality whatsoever. (29)[24]

In his response to anthropological relativism, Rescher grants that rationality (and hence objectivity) is a normative concept. It could hardly be otherwise. He puts the point this way:

> Our concern with rationality puts us on an unavoidably normative track. The issue is not what people happen to think or do in common, but how they ought to proceed if a claim to rationality is to be made good.... The supremacy (for us) of our standards lies not in the universality of their de facto acceptance but in their (ex hypothesi) condition as our best estimate of what the demands of rationality are – our conscientiously formed conviction that universality *ought* to obtain.... Rationality, as we ourselves see it, is a matter of striving intelligently for appropriate resolutions – using *relevant* information and *cogent* principles of reasoning.... If that is not what those others are after, then it is not *rationality* that concerns them. (29-30)

Using this insight, a journalist could argue against Tuchman that journalistic objectivity is not just any "ritual" but a "discipline of verification"[25] that any rational journalist would follow in the same circumstances. Such a reply would take most of sting out of Tuchman's analysis of this notion. The question yet to be answered is: Can journalists make this reply, and if so, under what conditions? But that issue is beyond the scope of this paper.

Objection from historicism

The second objection to objectivity is the claim that our beliefs are historically conditioned, "hence, strict objectivity with its demand for universal cogency, is simply impracticable."(31) Rescher isolates the flaw of this argument in the confusion of objectivity as "a matter of extra-contextuality." He accepts that all investigation proceeds in a historical context and

> … within a given state-of-the-art level of information and of ideas, But such contextuality does not preclude objectivity, because objectivity is not a matter of freedom of context. Rather, it is a matter of how reasonably one manages to proceed within the context in which one operates: namely, by doing that which any rational person would do in the particular conditions and circumstances at issue. (31-32)

Applied to journalism, the reply simply notes that just because a journalist is historically and culturally situated does not mean objectivity is not possible. What matters for objectivity is to proceed as any rational person would in those circumstances.

Historical contexts are often cited to explain the decline of objectivity as a working journalistic philosophy. Two such contexts are the McCarthy hearings and the civil rights movement. McCarthy was able to exploit journalistic "objectivity" to get his false accusations heard. The "official sources" during the civil rights struggles of the 1960s and 70s were usually sources unsympathetic to this movement and thus biased the flow of information.[26] But these historical events are, at best, an argument against an oversimplification of objectivity as a set of techniques to be mechanically followed.[27] There is nothing in those historical examples that demonstrate the impossibility of cognitively objective news judgments as the judgments that any reasonable journalist would make in the same circumstances. All that the history of journalism shows is that this is sometimes difficult or simply not done.

Objection from sociology of knowledge

The sociologist of knowledge objection to cognitive objectivity is that since knowledge is a man-made artifact, it reflects the conditions of the process by which and through which it was produced. Hence, objectivity "with its need for circumstantial detachment is simply unavailable."(33)

Rescher grants that knowledge is conditioned by the circumstances of its production, but adds,

> … this circumstantiality of our knowledge does not and should not mean that it cannot escape distorting biases. The idea of what any sensible person would and should do in the circumstances is still applicable. There is still the open possibility that our circumstance-produced knowledge should be circumstance-transcendently

cogent."(34)

The gist of his argument is that "sociologism's rejection" of objectivity fails to distinguish between how a belief is produced and the correctness of that belief. The "inferential leap" from "circumstance-produced artifact" to "its cogency is confined to the conditions and circumstances of its production" is not appropriate. The artifactual nature of beliefs or judgments, Rescher says, is "something that nowise precludes their truth any more than the artifactuality of a bomb precludes its explosive impact on the real world. In both instances it is the nature of the objective conditions that is the paramount factor."(34) News stories are, indeed, "circumstance-produced artifacts,"[28] but that does not entail that they cannot be true or objective.[29]

Objection from personalists

The personalist argument against objectivity is that abstract rationality ignores the personal space of "whims and idiosyncrasies" that makes us human.

This is really more of an argument against rationality than objectivity, Rescher notes. He readily grants that there is more to life than objective reason. But, so he adds, "it is objective reason itself that sets those limits to objectivity….Assuredly, man does not live by reason alone, and many rewarding human activities make little or no use of reasoning." (35) And again, Rescher writes that "….Idiosyncratic aims and preferences certainly deserve to have a place in some departments of personal life, but science (rational inquiry) and human interaction at the social level (moral and ethical comportment) are not among them." (36-37)

An illustration of this point for journalism can be found in the New Journalism rejection of objective reporting in the 1960s. This movement -- associated with the names of Tom Wolfe and Norman Mailer, to name but two -- adopted literary techniques for a more humanistic journalism, a journalism "powered by feeling as well as intellect."[30] Dardenne rightly notes that this literary movement in journalism "strikes at the heart of journalism – its credibility as a source of truth."[31] Fuller, a novelist himself, gives a generally sympathetic account of the techniques of that movement.

But Fuller cautions how readily those techniques can violate the truth discipline.[32] This "personalist" argument against objectivity, therefore, carries little weight as an argument against objectivity in journalism. Literary techniques may be appropriate, in some circumstances, but never to stretch truth or invent facts.

Feminist objection

The feminist argument against objectivity is that objectivity represents a form of depersonalization because it abstracts from gender and the "affective-emotional relationship. And for this reason the objective approach distorts and slants the views one takes… There is nothing all that intersubjective about objectivity – it is simply, in actuality, the specifically male slant on things." (37)[33]

Rescher's response to this objection is to agree that while gender-specific concerns and interests are natural, there is little to be said for allowing gender-specific factors to affect the findings of a particular inquiry. "One need no more to be a male to study male anatomy or male behaviors than one need be a chimpanzee to study chimpanzees." (38) Thus, while gender is relevant in sociological questions about scientific work, or psychological questions about the choice of problems and methodologies, there is no reason to accept that gender is relevant to substantive issues about cognitive findings.

> There is no more reason why a female and male cosmologist should come up with different interpretations of the same data than why a female and a male physician should come up with different diagnoses for the same patient. There can be no feminist electrodynamics that differs from a masculine version." (39)

There is a school of thought that holds journalism traditionally and systemically discriminates against women. Proponents of this school cite "evidence" that demonstrates a disproportionate amount of space used to describe news said to be of primary interest to males, or the disproportionate number of male sources cites in news stories. Even if one were to grant that this evidence supports the feminist claim, there is still no reason to accept the further claim that objectivity itself is to blame. For this "evidence" is presented as objectively valid for the claims made.[34]

Marxist and class-interest theories

The gist of this objection is that the cognitive product reflects the interests and preoccupations of those who will benefit from the product.

Rescher's reply here is to grant that while questions may be socially determined, the answers should be independent from the conditions that led to the question being asked.

> … there can be no valid capitalist arithmetic that differs from a Marxist version. There is no upper-class cytology that differs from a proletarian variant. Different social groups may possibly have different scientific preoccupations. But as regards the concrete questions, those resolutions should reflect the facts investigated rather than the idiosyncratic predilections of investigators. Jewish physics, bourgeois biology, or feminist algebra are no more than mirages in the eyes of misguided ideologists. (41)

The journalistic objectivity application here can be found in Chomsky and others who have argued that published and broadcast news is nothing but "propaganda" because it supports the values and interests of those in power.[35] The answer to this objection, if we follow Rescher, is that there is no more pro-elitist news than there is pro-labor news or pro-poor news. According to the objectivity standard, the news is just that, news.

This reply would shift the blame for the difficult-to-deny pro-establishment view of the world we get in the news media from journalistic objectivity to the "media system" or other external constraints on news judgment. This view is consistent with Lichtenberg's position. She holds that defending the concept of objectivity "in no way amounts to the claim that the press (in general or in any particular manifestation) is in fact objective or free of ideological or other bias.[36] In short, the de facto appearance of establishment bias in the media is not an argument against the possibility of objectivity. It is, at best, an argument that demonstrates how difficult it can be to achieve this objectivity in practice, and it underscores the importance for journalists to maintain a "go to hell fund."[37]

Post-modernists

The post-modernist objection to objectivity is that objectivity is simply a delusion. Our knowledge claims, according to this view, are merely that which people find it convenient to believe or what they happen to believe; all we have is opinion.

The post-modernist objection is rejected in summary fashion. Rescher argues that the position is internally incoherent because it presents itself as a correct assessment of the situation. If it is a correct assessment, then the position itself is mistaken, "It saws off the very limb which alone is able to sustain it," Rescher argues. (42) A postmodernist, so Rescher notes, may be willing to accept this position, but "there is no earthly reason why we, who are not among the already persuaded, should join them there. Nor – on their own telling – will any such reason ever be forthcoming." (43)

I know of no coherent post-modern critique of journalistic objectivity. If there is one, and Rescher is right, then there is no point in worrying about it.

Social activists

This objection has a direct application to the public or civic journalism movement. According to the social activist objection, objectivity implies detachment and disengagement. Hence, so Rescher notes, objectivity appears to require "passivity and disengagement from the problems of personal and social life. Objective people are mere bystanders who will not take a stand against the world's evils."(43)[38]

This view rests on a "grave misconception," so Rescher argues, the misconception being the failure to recognize that cognitive objectivity and detachment from civic life are two different things. Understanding a situation objectively does not entail approving of it. "And there is nothing about a commitment to objectivity that discourages actions that implement such rational and reasonable assessments. Quite to the contrary! It would surely be totally unreasonable to disconnect one's actions from one's conscientiously made evaluations." (44)

The main point of this objection – and reply – is to see that the demand of cognitive objectivity, by itself, is insufficient to reject civic journalism's view of journalism as a way to "connect" citizens and civic life or to achieve other community goals.[39]

This discussion of cognitive objectivity has tried to demonstrate the vitality of this concept for journalism. It means that journalistic news accounts can make knowledge claims provided they have warrants or evidence for those claims that any reasonable person would recognize as such. It is, in other words, not a vain enterprise for journalists to strive for credibility. If cognitive objectivity were not possible, as the critics allege, then all such striving would be vain.

Cognitive objectivity, however, is but one dimension of the objectivity concept that relates to truth telling. Cognitive objectivity tells us that such truth telling can, in principle, be achieved, but it does not tell us how such knowledge is possible, for that possibility hinges on the concept of truth. And the possibility of truth, in turn, hinges on the possibility of our access to a "real world 'out there' that serves as the ultimate test of truth – the warrant – for our knowledge claims and beliefs.. But before we get to these issues of ontological objectivity it is worthwhile to explore how cognitive objectivity relates to communication. For journalists, one of the many benefits of Rescher's work is that communication is given primacy of place in the rational scheme of things.

Cognitive Objectivity and Communication

Cognitive objectivity and communication are intertwined in pragmatic ways. Rescher presents several philosophical arguments to show that cognitive objectivity is a necessary condition for communication, and how communication, in turn, serves the interests of cognitive objectivity. His arguments that show how communication and cognitive objectivity are interlaced can be listed as follows:

(a) our use of language presupposes cognitive objectivity;
(b) interpersonal and group communication presupposes cognitive objectivity; and,
(c) our communal well-being and survival presuppose cognitive objectivity.

The argument from language use is based on the distinction between **a report** of a belief and an **assertoric endorsement** of a belief. Without getting into the technicalities here, the gist of this argument is that the assertoric expressions of our language -- such as "Jones knows that water boils at 100 degrees Centigrade" -- implicitly refer to competence to assess correct language use, and hence "involves us in an implicit subscription to the idea of objectively cogent standards."(85)[40] Rescher adds that this reference to objectively cogent standards, by itself, does not establish the commitment as correct. But it does support a "strong presumption in its favor, a presumption that only a cogent and convincing argument to the contrary could manage to defeat." (85)

Rescher's argument from communication is that since "we live in a world we share with others," we "need to proceed objectively – to be efficient and effective in the crucial business of coordinating beliefs and actions with those of people with whom we need to interact." This proceeding objectively means that we do "what any reasonable person would do in the existing circumstances, we enter upon a universalization that renders one's own proceedings generally intelligible to the rest." (86)

Furthermore, since we do, in fact, communicate, the need for and importance of cognitive objectivity – the sharing and testing of views – is enhanced. "But even more importantly," so Rescher adds,

> Objectivity is a pivotal function in the context of the community that we require for well-being and survival. We need not only to answer questions and make statements in such a way that can be *understood* by others but also in such a way that they will be *accepted* by them. (86)

Rescher sums up the way in which communication and cognitive objectivity interrelate as follows:

> Objectivity facilitates communication because by proceeding objectively, by doing as others would do, we render ourselves intelligible to them. Conversely, communication aids the pursuit of objectivity because information about what others are doing – and how and why they do it – enables us to benefit from their efforts at understanding a common, shared world.(86)

These arguments apply directly to the communicative activity of journalists. Journalists can be thought of as facilitating these efforts at community building and increasing the scope of our collective efforts to understand our common world. Nothing here would appear to rule out the kind of news projects known as civic or public journalism. Such activities would appear to be consistent with the demands of objectivity, not contrary to them.

Communication and ontological objectivity

Before Rescher develops his arguments for ontological objectivity – the rationality of our belief in an external world 'out there' -- he makes an important distinction between making a true statement or having a true **contention** of a thing, and having a true or correct **conception** of the thing. The gist of the distinction is that while our contentions are specific and individual and, as such, true or false, our conceptions are general and always incomplete and hence must be presumed to be incorrect. He uses an example from the pre-Socratic philosophers to illustrate the distinction:

> Anaximander of Miletus presumably made many correct contentions about the sun in the fifth century B.C. – for example, that its light is brighter than that of the moon. But Anaximander's conception of the sun (as the flaming spoke of a great wheel of fire encircling the earth) was totally wrong. (89)

The point is that it is much more difficult, if not impossible, for us to arrive at the correct conception of a thing, than to make true contentions. All that a true contention requires is that we get a certain part right, for example, that glass is transparent. But to arrive at the correct conception of what glass is, so Rescher says, "*we must get the essentials right* – we must have an overall picture that is basically correct." (89) And this knowledge is difficult to achieve, in fact, impossible to attain. The reason is that

> Having a correct conception or adequate conception of something as the object it is required that we have all the *important* facts about it right. But since the prospect of discovering further important facts can never be eliminated, the possibility can never be eliminated that matters may so eventuate that we may ultimately (with the wisdom of hindsight) acknowledge the insufficiency or even inappropriateness of our earlier conceptions. (90)

This leads to a kind of "epistemic modesty" that requires us to accept that our conceptions are open-ended and corrigible. This is not a false modesty. We need it because if "we took our conception as definitive, if we *identified* 'the thing itself' with 'the thing exactly as we conceive of it,' then we would be unable to communicate with others about a common world." (90) Communication would cease because instead of talking about things with "open-ended and corrigible" conceptions, we would have nothing to talk about. Indeed, we could not even preach about our own absolutely correct conception of the thing because that conception would not be accessible to the others, for *their* view of the thing would *not* be absolute but corrigible.

Communication and ontological objectivity

This acceptance of the corrigibility of our conceptions or "self-abnegation" as Rescher also calls it, is what connects cognitive objectivity in communication with ontological objectivity. Given communication, it now follows that, "without a presupposition of ontological objectivity the very idea of investigating a shared world would become inoperable."(91) This presupposition of an external world pertains to its identity not its conception:

> To communicate about real-world issues we must avoid claiming finality for our conception of things. To communicate about common, shared objects we need not claim to have it right – and we need not even agree on the *descriptions* of things. But it is crucial that we come together-with respect to their identity.(91)[41]

This presupposed "identity of focus" in communication is the real world. It is important to understand that this "presupposition" of the external world is an absolutely *necessary commitment* that any speaker who wishes to be taken seriously must make. Without this presupposition, communication is rendered impossible. Rescher also refers to this presupposition as a "conventionalized intention" or communicative "social contract" to discuss things as they really are, whatever our own conceptions may happen to be.(92)[42]

It is also important to grasp that this communicative "social contract" is not the result of intersubjective agreement, which is something we may discover *a posteriori*, after the fact. The identity of focus on the real world in communication is a necessary presupposition to make communication itself possible. It has nothing to do with what we, as social agents, may agree or disagree about. The presupposition of this focus on the real world means, in fact, that the "conversation" to use one of Carey's favorite words to describe journalism, is possible precisely because we are able to continue to talk about the same world.(93)[43]

Communication – to be possible at all – presupposes an identity of focus on "objectively real things" for us to talk about. Since we communicate to acquire and share knowledge and information, it follows that epistemic and ontological objectivity are "indissolubly linked." (95) What links them is the same presupposition that exists between communication and ontological objectivity, namely "the supposition of real-world objects whose true character is independent of what any of us happen to think."(97-8)

Cognitive and ontological objectivity

The limits of our knowledge gained from experience dictate the postulation of the real world 'out there.' That objectively real world or thing behind our experience of its manifestations is not an ontologically distinct entity or Kantian "thing-in-itself." It is a world that we can probe and learn more and more about. But it is also a world that – given the limits of our intellect – is in principle unknowable in its totality. We can learn more and more about it, but we can never know when we know all there is to know about it. Even more important, we can never know whether what we think we know is absolute correct. Our knowledge is forever corrigible.[44]

With this emphasis on the fallibility of our knowledge, Rescher gives a new twist to the realist argument for an external world. The traditional argument for realism is an argument based on our scientific knowledge of the world. But for Rescher the realist thesis is justified by "our realization of the inevitable *shortcomings* of our scientific knowledge."[45]

Conclusion

What Rescher's philosophical defense of objectivity shows for journalism is that this concept is far from dead. Furthermore, the same arguments also establish that objectivity is essential for civic journalism. Without it, neither truth nor communication is possible. And without the possibility of communication or truth-telling, there can be no journalism at all, civic or otherwise. Journalism, at best, would be embedded with public relations.

End Notes

[1] Anthony Serafini, "Applying Philosophy to Journalism," in *Philosophical Issues in Journalism*, Elliot D. Cohen, ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 258.

[2] Fuller, for example, says. "What philosophical analysis had not already undermined, radical multiculturalism did."Jack Fuller, *News Values: Ideas for an Information Age*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 14. What he calls "radical multiculturalism" is also known as post-modernism, a term that may be usefully applied to artistic work, but refers to no useful concepts in philosophy so far as I have been able to discover. Knowlton also refers to this movement. He says: "As part of the culture wars and the postmodern critiques sweeping America's college campuses in the last decade, many of journalism's critics have defined objectivity as something that approaches perfect truth and then dismissed the term so defined as an absurd idea." (Steven R. Knowlton, *Moral Reasoning for Journalists: Cases and Commentary* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1997), 36.)

[3] Published by the University of Notre Dame Press, 1997. Rescher is a leading American philosopher working at the University of Pittsburgh.

[4] Cf. Edmund Lambeth, *Committed Journalism: An Ethic for the Profession*, Second Edition, (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1992), 65: "The seeming hoariness of the argument is itself a danger to the field. The topic actually is as fresh, as palpable, as the next recession to be explained or the next war to be reported or the next budget to be interpreted." See, for example, Robert A. Hackett and Yuezhi Zhao, *Sustaining Democracy: Journalism and the Politics of Objectivity* (Toronto: Garamond Pres, 1998), who refer to objectivity as the "The God Who Won't Die" (82ff.) Michael Schudson, "The objectivity norm in American Journalism," *Journalism: Theory, practice and criticism*, Vol. 2, No. 2 (August 2001), 149. Schudson's main concern is to seek the historical origin and reasons for the articulation of objectivity as a norm that was already in place by the time it was articulated as such. Another useful historical study of the idea of objectivity is Richard Streckfuss, "Objectivity in Journalism: A Search and a Reassessment," *Journalism Quarterly*, Vol. 67, No. 4 (Winter, 1990). It was Streckfuss' article that prompted the search for an account of the origins and nature of objectivity in science, the alleged ground or basis for the emergence of the journalistic ideal. See also, Judith Lichtenberg, *Encyclopedia of Applied Ethics*, Vol. 3, 381. For an instructive "debate" on both the issues and confusions in the notion of objectivity see John C. Merrill and Everette E. Dennis, *Media Debates: Great Issues for the Digital Age*, Third Edition. (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth/Thomson Learning, 2002),119 -133.

[5] Cf. Don H. Corrigan, *The Public Journalism Movement in America: Evangelists in the Newsroom* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1999).

[6] Peter Novick, *That Noble Dream: The `Objectivity Question' and the American Historical Profession*. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 1, where he notes that the "idea and ideal of objectivity is "the rock" on which professional historiography was built.

[7] Davis Merritt, Jr., "Disconnecting from Detachment: Six Arguments for an Ethic of Journalistic Purposefulness," in *Washington and Lee University Ethics in Journalism*, Vol. 1, No. 1, September 1998, 2.

[8] Merrit, *op. cit.*, 2. [His emphasis.]

[9] Nicholas Rescher, *Objectivity: The Obligations of Impersonal Reason*. (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1997), 4. "The juror who gives credence to the defendant's pretty

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sister that he denies to a less attractive prosecution witness is a traitor to objectivity. And so is the laboratory investigator who admits to the record a reading favorable to his expectations but dismisses an unfavorable one as a mere observation error." (4) Because of the many references to the Rescher work, future page references will simply be included in the text. Footnotes will only be used if there is more to say.

[10] This is an allusion to Harvey Molotch and Marilyn Lester, "Accidents, Scandals, and Routines: Resources for Insurgent Methodology," in *The TV Establishment*, ed. Gaye Tuchman. (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1974), 53-65, as cited in Dan Schiller, *Objectivity and the News: The Public and the Rise of Commercial Journalism*. (Philadelphia: University of Philadelphia Press, 1981), 2.

[11] "News is that part of communication that keeps us informed of the changing events, issues, and characters in the world outside." Bill Kovach and Tom Rosentiel, *The Elements of Journalism: What Newspeople should Know and the Public Should Expect.*(New York: Crown Publishers, 2001), 21.

[12] Theodore L. Glasser, "Objectivity and News Bias," in *Philosophical Issues in Journalism*, ed. Elliot D. Cohen. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 176-183. While Glasser grants that the press has "responded to many of the more serious consequences of objective reporting" he insists that: "What remains fundamentally unchanged is the journalist's naïvely empirical view of the world…. Nowhere is this belief more evident than when news is defined as something external to -- and independent of -- the journalist. The very vocabulary used by journalists when they talk about news underscores their belief that news is 'out there,' presumably waiting to be *exposed* or *uncovered* or at least *gathered*. This is the essence of objectivity…. Since news exists 'out there' -- apparently independently of the reporter -- journalists can't be held responsible for it…." Cf. on Gans, *Newsmaking*, 188: "Because objectivity is defined as a matter of intent, it includes the freedom to disregard the implications of the news…." Jay Rosen, too, in his *What Are Journalists For?* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999), 218, in a quote from a *New York Times*, Dec. 14, 1994 article: "At the root of objectivity is the wish to be free of the results of what you do."

[13] Like Merrill, Lichtenberg regards these questions about objectivity and truth as metaphysical. Judith Lichtenberg, "In Defence of Objectivity Revisited," in *Mass Media and Society, op. cit.*, 227-28. [Her emphasis.]

[14] Rescher's emphasizes the links between rationality and objectivity. Sometimes, objectivity is rejected because rationality itself is rejected."We live in an era where the spirit of the times favors the siren call of subjectivism, relativism, skepticism," Rescher says. While he does not intend to convert the "logophobes to whom rationality itself means little or nothing" Rescher does hope "to reach people who are not as yet among those converted to the cause of unreason."[14]

[15] Cf. Robert Nozick's *Invariances: The Structure of the Objective World* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001). A perusal of that work suggests considerable agreement with Rescher's view of the matter. See, for example, 76: "That invariance is importantly connected to something's being an objective fact is suggested by the practice of physicists, who treat what is invariant under Lorentz transformations as more objective than what varies under these transformations."

[17] He uses the photograph analogy to describe objectivity to contrast it with objectivity-as-the-view-from-nowhere." Rescher grants that all depiction is from a particular point of view, but what "is at issue with objectivity is not point-of-view-lessness but what might be characterized as photographic accuracy -- trying to represent pretty much what any normal observer would recognize as a

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depiction from that point of view." (6). He also contrasts the poet and scientist. Both want to be heard by all, but the poem is a "private and potentially idiosyncratic message," while the scientist "wants to present an objective, impartial, and even in some degree impersonal version of the facts." So, of course, do journalists.

[18] "The resolution of an issue is objective if it is arrived at without the introduction of any resources (be they substantive or methodological) that would not be deemed as acceptable *in the circumstances* by any rational and reasonable individual. And objective resolution is one that is independent of "extraneous factors" above and beyond the resources of abstract reason and circumstantial reasonableness. Obviously, what is rational for someone to do or think *hinges on the particular details of how this individual is circumstanced* – and the prevailing circumstances of course differ from person to person and group to group."(11)

[19] And again: " Objectivity, then, is a matter of universality (or at least generality) of recognition access, unrestricted availability to the community of standard respondents -- in the cognitive case rational thinkers, in the photographic case normal observers.... The crucial thing for objective comportment is that another sensible person, presented with what is essentially the same problem situation, would then say: "Yes, I can see why he resolved the issue that way. In the circumstances, I would have done much the same thing myself.".... One potentially effective means of achieving objectivity is "to put oneself in another's place" and to proceed by taking into view some paradigmatically reasonable person and asking what they would do if confronted by a situation of the sort that one is facing oneself.... To strive for objectivity is to seek to put things in such a way that not just kindred spirits but virtually anyone can see the sense of it (7-8.) Notice, incidentally, that this view of being "impersonal" and "impartial" hardly amounts to the "pathological" form of detachment Clifford Christians and his colleagues decry. (*Good News: Social Ethics and the Press*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993, 118ff.). There is nothing "dehumanizing" going on here, as Rescher notes, except to abstract from "those idiosyncrasies that stand in the way of someone's doing what 'any of us' -- any rational, reasonable, sensible, normal person -- would do in one's place."(8)

[20] The Kovach-Rosentiel "discipline of verification" is on the mark here, except that without an objective "real world" verification methods are like cars without wheels.

[21] Rescher argues that if it were not for objectivity's crucial capacity "to put oneself in another's place," the explanatory mission of such branches of human studies as anthropology and sociology would itself be rendered impracticable." (31)

[22] Rescher, *op. cit.*, 216n, cites the source of this article as *American Philosophical Quarterly* Vol. 1 (1964), 307-24.

[23] Rescher refers here to a "quarrel" between E. E. Evans-Pritchard and Lucien Levy-Bruhl. Levy-Bruhl said that primitive people have a "pre-logical mentality" and Evans-Pritchard argued that primitive people were "perfectly `logical' alright but used a logic *different* from ours." (27) He cites the example of the view of the Nuer that swamp light is identical with spirit but spirit is not identical with swamp light. Rescher notes "they are not being illogical but simply have in view a logic of `identity' different from that of the identity claims in vogue in Western cultures." (27) Rescher says that the "bafflement and confusion" is caused by translating the claim about spirits and swamp light using the identity conception when "the ground rules that govern this idea are not applicable..." (27)" The fact that the Nuer have different (and to us strange–seeming) beliefs about `spirits' no more means that they have a *logic* different from ours than the fact that they eat different (and to us strange-seeming) foods means that they have a digestive chemistry different from ours." (27-28)

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[24] Again, "The anthropologists' talk of different `rationality' is simply an overly dramatic (and also misleading) way of making a valid point, namely that they [the tribes they studied] do their intellectual problem-solving business in a way different from ours. But those different processes of theirs do not mean that they have a different *rationality* any more than those blowguns of theirs mean that they have a different *rifle*." (29)

[25] That is, of course, what Kovach and Rosentiel intend. But their "discipline" fails because it relies, in an unexamined way, on ontological objectivity. The same can be said for Fuller's "truth discipline." Truth, as we will see, presupposes ontological objectivity. That means, if objectivity is thrown out, so is truth.

[26] Knowlton, *op. cit.*, 36-42.His discussion is not very helpful. Knowlton cites as an example of "much responsible mainstream thought" the saying that "Reality is always in the eye of the beholder." (40) Such a claim is nonsense, and it is probably also nonsense to equate it with the "responsible mainstream" view of objectivity. Most journalists have more common sense.

[27] Lichtenberg, *op. cit.*, 238, notes in connection with the McCarthy era that objectivity "as providing a mouthpiece" is not an intelligent notion of objectivity: "We care about objectivity because we care about truth; giving credibility to baseless charges – whether by commission or omission – cannot count as objective."

[28] Reference has already been made to the work of Gans and Tuchman, both working in this tradition. We could add many more, such as Ericson, Richard V. and Patricia M. Baranek and Janet B. L. Chan, *Visualizing Deviance: A Study of News Organization* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987) and the companion volume, *Negotiating Control: A Study of News Sources*. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987). See also, Dan Berkowitz, *Social Meanings of News: A Text-Reader*, (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications Ltd., 1997).

[29] Cf. Bernard Roshco, *Newsmaking*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1975), 53, where he grants that the "logical criteria for evaluating the objectivity or a reporter's or scientist's role-performance can be the same." That underscores the point Rescher is making about the universality of objectivity.

[30] Nat Hentoff as quoted in Schudson, *Discovering the News*, 187. The reference is cited on 219 as"Behold the New Journalism – It's Coming After You," in *Evergreen Review* (July 1968).

[31] Robert Dardenne,"News as Narrative," in William David Sloan and Emily Erickson Hoff, *Contemporary Media Issues*, (Northport, AL: Vision Press, 1998), 445.

[32] Fuller, *News Values*,131 – 164.

[33] Cf. Here Nozick's somewhat sarcastic questions: "Can beliefs be objective? Is objectivity in beliefs always a virtue? (In the present climate of opinion, one has to ask whether it ever is a virtue.) Is objectivity just a male trait? Worse, is it (in the current phrase) merely a 'white, heterosexual, male' trait?" (75)

[34] For a comprehensive overview of feminist thought – and there is no one school – the reader is encouraged to consult Liesbet Van Zoonen, "Feminist Perspectives on the Media," in *Mass Media and Society*, Second Edition, *op. cit.*, 31-52.

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[35] See, for example, Edward S. Herman and Noam Chomsky, *Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media*, (New York: Pantheon Books, 1988).

[36] Lichtenberg, *op. cit.*, 240.

[37] Columbia's Dean Edward W. Barrett gave this advice to graduates. Quoted in Lambeth, *op. cit.* 69. It should also be noted, however, that there is some truth to the suggestion by Maxwell E. P. King, former editor of the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, that journalists ought to "participate in a vigorous articulation of the ethics and values of our profession, and… to press the case for meeting these responsibilities on those who run the large media companies." King was optimistic these managers would respond positively. (Maxwell E. P. King, "Journalism in an Egalitarian Society," *Washington and Lee University Ethics in Journalism*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (September, 1998) , 11.

[38] Note how Lippmann exemplified this view of objectivity in the following: "In thirty years of journalism I think I have learned to know the pitfalls of the profession and, leaving aside the gross forms of corruption, such as profiteering from inside knowledge… the most insidious of all the temptations is to think of oneself as engaged in a public career on the stage of the world rather than as an observant writer of newspaper articles about some of the things that are happening in the world." (Lippmann, as quoted in Ronald Steel, *Walter Lippmann and the American Century* (New York: Vintage Books, 1981), 388.) But, as Steel makes plain, Lippmann was hardly being candid. He often participated in public life.

[39] Such is, for example, the view of Michael Gartner: "News pages are supposed to explain their communities, not convene it. Newspaper reporters are supposed to explore issues, not solve them." (Gartner as quoted in Don H. Corrigan, *The Public Journalism Movement in America: Evangelists in the Newsroom* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1999),181.

[40]"**A report is a statement of the form (I) 'A** believes (accept, thinks) **that p**.' Here **A** is a person who, believes, accepts, or thinks that *p*, where p is an assertion of a fact. An **assertoric endorsement** has the form **(II) 'B** realizes (accepts, knows) **that p**.' Here **B** is a person who realizes that *p*, knows that *p*, or accepts that p." Rescher notes that "**(I') A** believes (accept, thinks) **that p**, but **A** is mistaken" makes perfectly good sense. We report that someone believes something, but that the person is mistaken in that belief. The same does not work with **II'**, however, as follows: **(II') "B** realizes (accepts, knows) **that p**, but **B** is mistaken." **II'** is a contradiction in terms. It simply cannot be the case that Jones realizes money doesn't grow on trees, but he is planting them anyway. His planting such trees demonstrates that he did not realize what the statement says he realized, namely that money does not grow on trees."(83)

[41] Note, incidentally, how close the following statement comes to describing journalism if we put "event" where Rescher has "thing." The passage would then read, "To communicate about real world issues we must avoid claiming finality for our conception of events. To communicate about events we need not claim to have it right – and we need not even agree on the *story* about the event. But it is crucial that we come together with respect to their occurrence." [I have equated "identity of a thing" with "occurrence of an event," because what is at issue here is their existence.]

[42] And again:"… the objectivity at issue in our communicative discourse is a matter of its *status* rather than one of its *content*. For the substantive content of a claim about the world in no way tells us whether it is factual or fictional. This is something we have to determine from its context; it is a matter of the frame, not the canvas. The fact-oriented basis of our information-transmitting exchanges is provided a priori by a conventionalized intention to talk about 'the real world.' This intention to take real objects to be at issue – objects having a nature that reaches well above and beyond our knowledge of them and far transcending our potentially idiosyncratic conceptions – is

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fundamental because it is overriding; that is, it overrides all of our other intentions when we enter upon the communicative venture. Without this conventionalized intention we should not be able to convey information – or misinformation – to one another about a shared 'objective' world."(92)

[43] Rescher puts the point even more forcefully a few pages later: "the key point may be put as follows: it is indeed a presupposition of effective communicative discourse about something that we purport (claim and intend) to make true statements about it. But for such discourse it is not required that we purport to have a true or even adequate conception of the item at issue. On the contrary, we must deliberately abstain from any claim that our conception is definitive if we are to engage successfully in discourse…. This sort of epistemic humility is the price we pay for keeping the channels of communication open." (95) Compare that with what Carey writes: "Journalists are merely part of the conversation; one partner with the rest of us – no more and no less. This is a humble role for journalism… but in fact what we need is a humble journalism." James Carey as quoted in Rosen, *What are Journalists For?* (80).

[44] This paragraph paraphrases the gist of Rescher's arguments on 97 – 102.

[45] Some communication scholars may suggest that this is nothing but an invalid argument from ignorance. That is, of course, a misunderstanding of what Rescher says. His argument is based on a knowledge – and acceptance – of the limits of our knowledge. That is not an argument from ignorance, but an argument from wisdom.

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Civic Journ

ELITE AND NON-ELITE SOURCING IN CIVIC AND TRADITIONAL JOURNALISM NEWS PROJECTS

By

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DEDICATION:
To my Lord Jesus Christ

This project was broken into two studies to analyze the use of "elite," media-savvy, and "non-elite," non-media savvy, sources in civic and traditional journalism. In the first study, four newspaper series about mining and aging were used to show the use of sources in the practice of civic journalism. The Charleston Gazette's "Mining the Mountains" traditional journalism series, and The Herald-Dispatch's "West Virginia After Coal" civic journalism series, both with six stories each, were chosen to explore the idea of whether civic journalism uses more non-elites as sources. The Ventura County Star's "Promise to Our Parents" traditional journalism series, and the Savannah Morning News "Aging Matters" civic journalism series was another comparison used to analyze the sourcing aspect of civic journalism. The results were significant in the mining comparison. The civic journalism newspaper used more non-elite sources. However, the results were not significant in the aging comparison and both news projects, with five articles each, used a similar number of both elite and non-elite sources. As a second study, the writers and editors of these news projects were interviewed to find out why they chose the sources they used. Other experts in the field of journalism were also interviewed for their perspectives. The interviews revealed the intentions of the civic writers were not the intent of civic journalism; sources used by civic journalists were not chosen based on civic journalism standards. And there was confusion on how one defines civic journalism. The purpose of this study was to discover what type of sources are used in civic and traditional journalism news projects, and why.

Elite and Non-elite Sourcing in Civic and Traditional Journalism News Projects

Civic journalism proponents want to change traditional journalism as we know it.[1] Civic journalism seeks to "engage newsrooms directly in public life to resolve community problems."[2] In this form of journalism, reporters and newspapers become advocates for the community by interacting in the community with forums, organizing community groups and instigating social change through writing and reporting. This movement promotes community advocacy, which helps to bring the citizens into the dialogue of a story.

One essential tool of civic journalism is it uses more ordinary citizens—or for the purpose of this study "non-elites"—as active players in the news.[3] Non-elites are those directly affected by the media.

It is believed that traditional journalism, or non-civic journalism, focuses too much on the elites when it comes to the information they cite as sources. Elites are media savvy, authoritative figures, who are experts in the field they represent and who are readily available to provide information. The goal of this study is to examine this one area of civic journalism: the sources, and to see if civic journalism is doing what it claims and truly bringing the community into the dialogue of the story.

Civic Journalism

From its modest beginnings at the end of the 1980s, civic journalism has become one of the most debated topics in print journalism today. Many people are skeptical of this concept, while some believe it is the future of news media.

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[1] Jay Rosen, "Public Journalism: Reconstructing the 'Public,'" *Tikkun*, Nov/Dec 1999, p. 28. A key article for Rosen describing how public journalism has to reconstruct the ties among the public, the citizens and the press.

[2] Elissa Papirno, "A Watchdog, Not a Participant," *The Hartford Courant*, 5 August 2001, sec. C, p.3. This article is a commentary about civic journalism and how *The Courant* addresses the issue. *The Courant* staff does not promote civic journalism, but say they are dedicated to the community.

[3] Seow Ting Lee, "Public Journalism and Non-Elite Actors and Sources," *Newspaper Research Journal*, 22(3) Summer 2001, p. 92. This is a research project on the use of sources in two newspapers, the civic journalism, *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, and the traditional, *The Washington Post*.

Civic journalism represents a "departure from contemporary mainstream journalism"[4] by supporting, championing and establishing civic progression. Most newspapers today do not get directly involved in the communities to protect the newspapers objectivity.

However, news that does not affect the community is making most readers lose interest. If the readers lose interest, then newspapers will continue to lose popularity and eventually phase out of people's everyday lives.[5]

One way civic journalism gets involved in the community is by having reporters interact with more stakeholders in the community and using them as sources. Brian Massey conducted a case study in 1998 to see if the increased use of average citizens as sources would allow civic journalism to have "longer-term success."[6] In the study, the sources in the *Tallahassee Democrat*, from 1995, when it practiced civic-journalism, and 1988, when it was a traditional newspaper, and the sources in the *Gainesville Sun*, a traditional-newspaper, were calculated to show that the 1995 *Tallahassee Democrat* used more average citizens as sources. However, this study concluded with a grim outlook for civic journalism. Massey came to the conclusion that the *Democrat's* "news work routines may be too ingrained – or too familiar as a strategy for surviving daily deadline pressures – to allow for anything other than a nominal concession to the kind of reform civic journalists say must be made."[7] In essence, civic journalism may not be practical for all issues, and traditional journalism may be a hard habit to break.[8]

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[4] Anthony J. Eksterowicz and Robert N. Roberts, *Public Journalism and Political Knowledge* (Oxford, England: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2000), p. 4. This is a book that goes into detail about the history of public journalism and into an outlook for the future of the concept.

[5] Jay Rosen, What are Journalists For? (Yale University Press, 1999), p. 84. This book is a recent public journalism work from Jay Rosen, the philosopher who created the concept of public journalism.

[6] Brian L. Massey, "Civic Journalism and Non-Elite Sourcing: Making Routine Newswork of Community Connectedness," *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, 75(2) Summer 1998, p. 394. This case study took the article from the *Tallahassee Democrat* in 1995 and 1988, and the articles from the 1995 Gainesville Sun to compare who used the most non-elite sources. The Tallahassee Democrat in 1995 is a civic journalism newspaper and it was not in 1988, the 1995 Democrat used the most non-elite sources.

[7] Ibid, 402.

[8] Massey, "Civic Journalism and Non-Elite Sourcing," 402.

Herbert Gans, writer of the book "*Deciding What's News: A Study of CBS Evening News, NBC Nightly News, Newsweek, and Time*," stated that journalists use more experts and elite sources because they find their information more reliable.[9]

Gans stated: "Sources in positions of formal authority are considered more trustworthy than others; beyond that, journalists apply the same criteria professionally that they and others use in everyday life, placing greater trust in people who are similar to them."[10]

Therefore, the use of sources in the news, and civic journalism's aim to use more ordinary people, may be the result of not only trust, but also the sources' incentives, power, ability to supply suitable information and geographic and social proximity to the journalists.[11]

Objectivity is another issue of debate surrounding the movement of civic journalism. Opponents of civic journalism continually use the argument that reporters will lose their First Amendment rights and that a journalist's objectivity will be lost when they become advocates. However, J. Herbert Altschull, writer of "Agents of Power," says the First Amendment is not just for the press, but also for the people.[12] He believes that reporters have already lost their objectivity, because "it (objectivity) permits criticism of individuals but not of the fundamental system, political, economic, or social."[13]

Gaye Tuchman stated that newspapers could do two things: mirror society or define society's events.[14] He recognized a pre-emptive, archaic division in news before the advent of civic journalism, and there is still a division that exists in the news media: civic and traditional journalism.

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[9] Herbert J. Gans, *Deciding What's News: A Study of CBS Evening News, NBC Nightly News, Newsweek, and Time,* (New York, NY: Pantheon Books, 1979), p. 130. This is one of the definitive journalistic books on the practice and values in the news profession.

[10] Ibid, 130.

[11] Ibid, 117.

[12] J. Herbert Altschull, "A Crisis of Conscience: Is Community Journalism the Answer?" *Journal of Mass Media Ethics*, 11(3), p. 170. The author of *Agents of* Power wrote this article advocating community journalism and proposing it as a solution to journalism's problems. Altschull asks for public interest to be the main concern of journalists, and for the public to play a larger role in news.

[13] Ibid, 169.

[14] Gaye Tuchman, *Making News: A Study in the Construction of Reality* (New York, NY: The Free Press, 1978), p. 183-184. This book could be considered a manual to the news industry that describes such aspects as professionalism and freedom of speech.

Civic Journalism: The Practice, Praise and Criticism

Some newspapers have taken the initiative toward civic journalism. *The Wichita Eagle*, with the help of Davis "Buzz" Merritt, the senior vice president, has become a model of civic journalism. Merritt, one of the pillars of civic journalism, defines the journalist's role in democracy as having three "fundamentals": shared information; an "agora" or marketplace for use of that information; and shared values regarding decisions when using that information.[15]

One of Merritt's arguments for civic (or public) journalism is that journalists do have values and those values can be used and are used in their work.[16]

> Consider what is traditionally "a helluva story" – the senator who steals, the company that dumps chemicals, the farmer who exploits workers. If we, or society, considered those things routinely acceptable, we would think of them as newsworthy. In reporting on them, we are acting out of a set of values; politicians should not steal, companies should not pollute, people should not be exploited.[17]

Jay Rosen, civic journalism pioneer, has produced numerous books and articles articulating the concept. One of his books, "What are Journalists For?" serves as a warning and an aid to the institution of journalism.

> But newspaper journalists had begun to feel the franchise slipping away. You once reached 80 percent of your community's households. Now you were down to 55 percent. Sooner or later, the warning would hit. It's not just readers disappearing; it's the public disintegrating, at least from our grasp.[18]

Andrew Kohut in "Public Support for the Watchdogs is Fading," wrote in the *Columbia Journalism Review*, "Many Americans see an ill-mannered watchdog that barks too often – one that is driven by its own interests rather than by a desire to protect public interest."[19]

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[15] Davis "Buzz" Merritt, *Public Journalism & Public Life: Why Telling the News is Now Enough* (Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc., Publishers, 1995), p. 7-11. Merritt is the senior vice president of *The Wichita Eagle*, a public journalism newspaper. This is book from one of the main activists of the public journalism movement and is about the movement of public journalism.

[16] Merritt, *Public Journalism & Public Life*, 93.

[17] Ibid, 93.

[18] Rosen, *What are Journalists For?*, p. 84.

G. Evans Witt in "Out of Touch in the Media," points out in *American Demographics*, "And they (journalists) admit they are out of touch with the public, too focused on 'inside baseball' and not enough on information people care about."[20]

Altschull wants to save journalistic traditions from the "cesspool" it seems to be heading toward.[21] He believes that the press is playing into the hands of the people in power when it comes to their political role.[22]

Opponents of civic journalism look at it from a different prospective. They see civic journalism as breaking the cardinal rules of journalism that have existed for decades.

For example, *The Hartford Courant* does not consciously practice civic journalism. However, *The Courant* actively covers town news.[23] Although, most newspapers consider local news coverage the core of their newspaper, they do not think it is ethical to participate in the community, which is the essence of the civic journalism debate. So, even though some newspapers aren't engaging the community to create dialogue, with public forums, the lines may be blurred as to whether newspapers represent the citizens more if they are defined as practicing "civic journalism."

The many praises and criticisms of civic journalism means that the concept is still assimilating into the mainstream, and many journalists debate whether it is the future of journalism.

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[19] Andrew Kohut, "Public Support for the Watchdogs is Fading," *Columbia Journalism Review,* 40(1) May/June 2001, p. 52. This is an article about how newspapers should perform more than a watchdog function over communities. This article advocates public journalism.

[20] G. Evans Witt, "Out of Touch in the Media," *American Demographics,* 21(6) June 1999, p. 26. This is an article about how the public feels disconnected from the media.

[21] Altschull, "A Crisis of Conscience," 168.

[22] Ibid, 169.

[23] Papirno, "A Watchdog, Not a Participant," p. 3.

The Future of Civic Journalism

Some believe that the early attempts of civic journalism were valiant, but unsuccessful.[24]

> Civic journalism experiments across the country have drawn the editorial scorn and negative news coverage of influential journalists at the *New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *Newsday*, the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, and the *New Yorker*, and critical reviews in the *Columbia Journalism Review* and *American Journalism Review*. In most of these critiques, a liberal press elite warns against the likely loss of editorial independence by media corporations that are said to use news coverage to market themselves as 'the community's pal.'[25]

The civic journalism movement is finding acceptability, according to a case study done by Paul S. Voakes.[26] In this study, he conducted a survey of 1,037 newspaper journalists nationwide, and they were asked four questions about how they approach journalism.[27] The questions were rooted in civic journalism ideals, but that was not mentioned in the survey.[28] He found that most journalists were already practicing civic journalism fundamentals and just not claiming it as civic journalism.[29]

Studies indicate that the concept of civic journalism is spreading. However, the data from Voakes' study proposes that newspapers are practicing civic journalism already without the civic label.

Hypotheses

H: In comparing a civic and traditional news series of a similar topic, a civic journalism project uses more non-elite sources than the traditional journalism project.

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[24] Edmund Lambeth, "Does Civic Journalism Have a Future?" edited by Michael Salvador and Patricia M. Sias, *The Public Voice in a Democracy at Risk* (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 1998), p.115. This book features various writers: Michael Salvador, Robert Schmuhl, Charles Arthur Willard, Jodi Cohen, Renee Hobbs, John Burns, Karlyn Kohrs Cambell, Edmund Lambeth, Richard Pride, Wen Shu Lee and Philip C. Wander, Roderick Hart and Patricia Sias. They discuss political issues and civic journalism.

[25] Ibid, 115.

[26] Paul S. Voakes, "Civic Duties: Newspaper Journalists' Views on Public Journalism," *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, 76(4) Winter 1999, p. 756-774. This is a case study where 1,037 newspapers were surveyed by being asked four questions that were relevant to civic journalism, but not labeled as such. The results showed the most journalists already practiced attributes of civic journalism.

[27] Voakes, "Civic Duties," 756, 765.

[28] Ibid, 756.

[29] Ibid, 770.

H2: Civic journalism writers embrace civic journalism fundamentals when reporting.

Methodology

Study I

For the first part of the research process, to find the sourcing methods used in civic journalism, a content analysis was conducted on four newspaper series--two that were civic journalism projects and two that were traditional journalism projects. Both civic journalism projects were Batten Award winners through the Pew Center for Civic Journalism. For further accuracy in comparison, the civic journalism projects were chosen having a similar topic to the traditional journalism projects. Also, a similar number of stories were selected out of each series for the comparisons.

The first comparison was a civic journalism project from *The Herald-Dispatch* from Sept. 17-22 in 2000 called "West Virginia After Coal," and a traditional journalism project called "Mining the Mountains" by *The Charleston Gazette* (dates used being Mar. 22, 1998 to Nov. 22, 1998). Both analyzed the economic impact of coal mining in West Virginia and addressed the issue of mountaintop removal. *The Dispatch* engaged the community for this series by holding an interactive forum including both broadcast and print media to create a discussion about the possibility of a post-coal economy. A total of 12 articles was used, six in each series. *The Dispatch* series, which was aided by a grant received from the Pew Center for Civic Journalism, was a continuous series used in its entirety. *The Gazette* series is ongoing, but, at the time of this study, had nine stories completed.

The second comparison involved two projects on aging, which looked at the role of caregiver, the decisions of the elderly and final choices made in regard to the elderly. The *Savannah Morning News* took a yearlong look in 2000 at aging with a grant received from the Pew Center for Civic Journalism, and produced "Aging Matters." The newspaper engaged the community in roundtable discussions to include them in the dialogue. The first articles in the five part subject series were coded. The traditional journalism project used was the *Ventura County Star*'s "Promise to Our Parents," series on aging. This was a five-part series containing only five stories published once a week starting on Sept. 30, 2001.

Through categories used to dissect the articles, the purpose of this study was to point out similarities and differences in civic journalism and traditional journalism sourcing.

The mining document set was chosen for the similarity in topic and date of production. Both projects were written post-coal boom era in West Virginia. They focused on the controversy behind the coal mining industry in the state. Coal mining brings jobs and money to West Virginia, but mountaintop removal damages the natural beauty of the state hurting the tourist industry and also creating a hazard for those living near the mining sites. The newspapers used in the study are also both largely distributed West Virginia newspapers with a similar readership. The "West Virginia After Coal" series was a 2001 Batten Award winner through the Pew Center for Civic Journalism. The "Mining the Mountains" series was winner of the 1999 Livingston Award, 1998 Roy W. Howard Award, 1998 Thomas L. Stokes Award and 1998 Southern Journalism Award for Investigative Reporting.

The civic journalism project on aging from the *Savannah Morning News* was a 2000 Batten Award winner through the Pew Center for Civic Journalism. The *Ventura County Star* traditional project on aging was chosen as the comparison after an interview with the managing editor, Joe Howry. He was asked, "Do you consider the "Promise to Our Parents" series to be a civic journalism series?" Howry responded, "There is good journalism, and there's bad journalism. We don't subscribe to the civic journalism, or public journalism, mentality that is so popular right now." Therefore, after choosing the series, they were coded.

All the articles were coded without prior knowledge of source content, except that the news projects had a similar topic and number articles, and that it did or did not subscribe to civic journalism.

The categorical development used to analyze the civic and traditional journalism projects under comparison was focused primarily on the types of sources, elite and non-elite, which were determined by the information provided by the sources.

For coding these articles, the following operational definitions were used:

Definitions:

Traditional Journalism: Is any newspaper or news series that does not promote community advocacy.

Civic Journalism: Promotes community advocacy and reporters and newspapers become advocates for the community by interacting in the community with public meetings, organizing community groups and instigating social change through writing and reporting. Civic journalism is "an effort to engage newsrooms directly in public life to resolve community problems."[30] One essential tool of civic journalism is it uses the "ordinary citizen as an active player in the news."[31] For example, civic journalists will hold public forums and meetings with the community to create dialogue and provide forums for debate.

Source: A source was a named or anonymous individual who provided opinion or information in a direct quote, partial quote or paraphrase.[32] Collective anonymous sources like "voters" or "government officials" were not used, and if a story used two affiliations for a single source, then the first category mentioned was coded.[33] Someone was not used as a source if someone else is quoting that person's words.

Elite Source: Elite was defined as any person used as an expert, or media savvy, source on the subject. An elite is an accessible source who is able to "subsidize news gathering efforts without any difficulty and exerted an influence over news events."[34] For example, a coal company official who feels mountaintop removal is beneficial by providing flat land and jobs to the state.

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[30] Papirno, "A Watchdog," 3.

[31] Lee, "Public Journalism and Non-Elite Actors and Sources," 92.

[32] Randall S. Sumpter and Melissa A. Braddock, "Source Use in a "News Disaster" Account: A Content Analysis of Voter News Service Stories," *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly*, 79(3) Autumn 2002, p. 543. This article is a research project that examined newspaper sources for eleven weeks in a "news disaster" story.

[33] Ibid, 543.

[34] Lee, "Public Journalism and Non-Elite Actors and Sources," 94.

Non-Elite Source: A non-elite source was considered a resident or anyone who had more of a personal stake in the issue being addressed. A non-elite was an "unknown"[35] or non-media savvy person. For example, a mother who says the blasting from the coal company is disturbing her family.

The balance of the elite and non-elite sources was used to highlight a particular fundamental tenet of civic journalism. This fundamental being, civic journalism focusing more attention on the non-elite sources than traditional journalism. The purpose for the source category is to learn whether civic journalism promotes the use of more average citizens as sources.

Study II

To understand the details behind the news projects and to gain better insight on the use of sources, a series of interviews was conducted with the writers and editors or writing coaches on the news projects. After these interviews were conducted, other experts in the field of journalism were gathered for their opinions.

Interview Questions [Writer]:

1) What was your role in the creation of the news series?

2) Do you consider the reporting you did (or the series itself) to be a vehicle for promoting community advocacy - meaning did you get involved in the community to help raise issues, solve problems and create dialogue?

3) What was the purpose behind the series? What did you hope to accomplish… as a reporter… as a newspaper?

4) Who did you first talk to for your series, in other words, who were your most valuable sources?

5) Why did you choose the sources you used? Were you pleased with them and their involvement?

6) Do you feel you used more average citizens as sources?

7) How did your goals and objectives evolve throughout the series?

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[35] Ibid, 94.

8) Do you consider the series a civic or traditional journalism news project? Civic meaning it promotes community advocacy and traditional meaning it does not promote community advocacy.

9) Did you have civic journalism fundamentals in mind when you were reporting?

10) Did you hold any forums or public meetings?

11) Define your newspaper's purpose and role in the community.

Interview Questions [Editor or Writing Coach]:

1) What was your role in the creation of the series?

2) Do you consider the series itself to be a vehicle for promoting community advocacy - meaning did the writer and the newspaper get involved in the community to help raise issues, solve problems and create dialogue?

3) What was the purpose behind the series? What did you hope to accomplish as a newspaper?

4) Who did you seek to first talk to for your series, in other words, who were your most valuable sources? Why were those sources chosen? Were you pleased with them and their involvement?

5) How did your goals and objectives evolve throughout the series?

6) Do you consider the series a civic or traditional journalism news project? Civic meaning it promotes community advocacy and traditional meaning it does not promote community advocacy.

7) Did you hold any forums or public meetings?

8) Define your newspaper's purpose and role in the community.

These questions were asked during phone interviews with the writers and editors or writing coaches of the news projects, and other questions were asked geared toward individual journalism professionals. All the interviews were recorded and then transcribed [see appendices for interviews].

Results

Study I

The two topics of mining and aging produced conflicting results. The analysis of *The Herald-Dispatch's* "West Virginia After Coal" civic journalism series and *The*

Charleston Gazette's "Mining the Mountains" traditional journalism series was started with the assumption that civic journalism will promote more average citizens as sources than traditional journalism. The finding was significant in this case that civic journalism used more non-elite sources.

However, in the second analysis, which involved the issue of aging with the *Savannah Morning News* civic journalism series and the *Ventura County Star* traditional journalism series the results were not significant.

Comparisons

The balance of the elite and non-elite sources used in the "Mining the Mountains" traditional journalism series showed that it indeed used more elite sources. *The Charleston Gazette* used 62 sources in the six stories coded and only 7 were non-elites and 55 were elites. Non-elites were only used in two stories.

The data concluded that *The Herald-Dispatch* used more non-elite sources than its traditional counterpart. In the entire "West Virginia After Coal" civic journalism series 48 sources were used, 29 were elite and 19 were non-elite. The results of this comparison were significant. The mining comparison adhered to the fundamentals of civic journalism by the civic series using more non-elites as sources than the traditional series; however, the aging comparison did not.

The "Aging Matters" civic journalism series included 31 sources, and 18 were elite and 13 were non-elite. The "Promise to Our Parents" traditional journalism series used 74 sources: 38 were elite and 36 were non-elite. These results showed no significance because there was not a clear distinction between civic and traditional journalism according to the operational definitions.

Calculations

Non-parametric statistics were chosen for the calculations because the data were nominal. Therefore, the data cannot be generalized to the population and it can make no assumption about normally distributed data.[36] A chi-square test was chosen for the data to find significance. After running a chi-square test on the data it was apparent that the mining comparison was significant. However, the aging comparison showed no significance.

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[36] Wimmer, Roger and Dominick, Joseph, *Mass Media Research: An Introduction*, (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth/Thomson Learning, Inc., 2003), p. 280. This is a textbook that teaches quantitative statistical methods.

The mining comparison including sources from the "Mining the Mountains" series and the "West Virginia After Coal" series produced a combined chi-square of 11.999 with a degree of freedom of 1 and a probability of .00053229. The distribution was significant.

The aging comparison including sources from the "Promise to Our Parents" series and the "Aging Matters" series came to a chi-square of 0.396 with a degree of freedom of 1 and a probability of 0.5291622. For significance at the .05 level, chi-square should be greater than or equal to 3.841. The distribution was not significant.

The numbers that made the data significant in the mining comparison were the non-elite calculations. In the civic mining series, 19 non-elites and 29 elites were found. In the traditional mining series, 7 non-elites and 55 elites were coded. In the chi-square analysis, the 19 non-elites came to X^2=5.1561 and the 7 non-elites came to X^2=3.9947. These numbers were compared to the chi-square value for a 2x2 matrix of 3.841. Any number equal to or higher than the 2x2 chi-square value of 3.841 is significant.

A phi test was also run to help explain variance.[37] For the mining comparison, it was found that just over 10 percent of the variance in the dependent variable could be explained by the independent variable, and for the aging comparison just over .38 percent.

However, there should be a certain amount of caution used when viewing these results due to the small number of sources calculated. For example, one source added to or taken away from the non-elite data would change the results significantly.

A test for intercoder reliability was run to find error in the operational definitions. An outside coder coded the sources in 3 of the 22 stories. Cohen's kappa was calculated from information in a constructed matrix of agreement, or "confusion," which produced a kappa of .9686. This calculation showed a 96.9 percent agreement between the two coders.

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[37] Raymondo, James C., *Statistical Analysis in the Behavioral Sciences*, (Boston: McGraw-Hill, 1999), p. 354. This is a book to guide people in the application of statistics.

Study II

Firstly, the interviews showed the intent of the writers and editors versus the intent of civic journalism. The interviews showed that the civic journalists were not aware of and did not intently practice the fundamentals of civic journalism.

The civic journalists, Mary Landers, of the "Aging Matters" series, and Beth Gorcyzca, of the "West Virginia After Coal" series, both were skeptical of their contribution to the movement of civic journalism; however, both series received civic journalism grants and awards.

When Gorcyzca was asked if she considered the series a civic or traditional news project she said, "I think people call it civic journalism now, but I think all civic journalism is is good journalism."

Also, Gorcyzca said she did not have any civic journalism fundamentals in mind when she was reporting and when she was asked if she was told exactly what civic journalism entailed before beginning the civic series she responded: "They may have told the editor, but it didn't pass down to me. All I know is that we got about $12,000 to do the project."

Gorcyzca's editor on the series, Len LaCara, said it was in fact a civic journalism project but felt, "civic journalism is good journalism and the best traditional journalism is civic in nature."

Landers, after also being asked if she considered the series to be a civic or traditional news project, and then giving her the definitions, she said:

"I think we were trying to do a civic journalism project. In fact, it won an award for it being a civic journalism project… I don't think we fully achieved that. I think that was our aim and we tried… In fact, I have a friend who is an avid reader of the newspaper and so is her mother, and her mother is probably in her 70s, and the comment from her mother was, 'Why do they keep writing about old people?' Which cracked me up, 'Oh well, we are really engaging people aren't we?'"

Lander's editor on the project, Daniel Suwyn, felt more successful with the project, he said:

"I think our purpose was to get people in the community talking about these issues, and looking for (a) central solution, and I think in that respects, it happened."

The traditional journalists had a mixed response to the way they reported their projects.

Ken Ward, Jr., writer of the "Mining the Mountains" series, believes reporters should "try to find out the truth," and that the type of reporting he did was investigative journalism and could be considered traditional.

Ward's writing coach for the series, Kate Long said: "The only (thing) that I've seen that's really different about it (civic journalism)… is these situations (forums) in which the paper basically creates the news, rather than reports it."

Kim Lamb Gregory, lead writer of the "Promise to Our Parents" series, believed the newspaper was supposed to be a "mirror" and considered her reporting to be traditional journalism, but she embraced most of the fundamentals of civic journalism with her intent because she embraced talking to average citizens more than elites.

Gregory's editor on the series Julie Price agreed that the "greatest resource was the people, the stories they had to tell."

However, Gregory disagreed with the newspaper holding forums, she said, "I'd have to say that I think we would feel that that would cross the line because when you start creating the news or creating your own forum, you're creating an event."

Intent appears to be the only difference between what most people consider civic journalism and traditional journalism, besides holding public meetings or forums.

Christine Martin, dean of the WVU Perley Isaac Reed School of Journalism, said: "I don't think civic journalism just comes down to 'forums.' I think it comes down to purpose. Does the newspaper and its staff deliberately want to champion, promote, usher in or establish civil change and civic progression, or does the paper simply want to find and report the truth, knowing that the truth may well spur civic justice and social change."

Secondly, sources were not chosen based on civic journalism standards, just the standards of the writer.

Gorczyca felt she accomplished civic journalism fundamentals unintentionally.

She said, "You talk to the people who are affected by whatever is going on… The city council is talking about imposing a tax on dog owners; you go out and talk to a dog owner. It wasn't this is civic journalism, it's just this is journalism."

Landers did what she considered normal reporting for the civic aging series, she said, "On a daily basis I was thinking, how are we going to be agents of change with this story?"

Gregory tries to use as many average citizens as possible when she reports what she considers traditional journalism, she said, "The easiest thing in the world is to get the bureaucratic sources… they're listed in the phonebook. The hardest thing in the world for any series or any story is getting an ordinary person willing to let you walk into his or her life and be honest about it."

Regarding the reporting done on the traditional mining series, Long said, "…the kind of sources that you choose are not a function of the form, traditional or civic, they're the choices of a reporter…"

Thirdly, most interviewees were confused about how civic journalism was defined. Definitions were provided at any given point to the interviewees, but some debated the subjectivity of words and of even the definitions.

Assistant Managing Editor in charge of national and international news at *The St. Petersburg Times* Stephen Buckley said, "I think if you were to ask 100 different newspaper editors how they define civic journalism, you'd probably get 50-60 (different) responses, so I think that that's part of the problem."

Scott Bosley, executive director of the American Society of Newspaper Editors (ASNE), said, "The (civic journalism) definition may be in the mind of the beholder."

Long, the traditional editor, debated that the words used in civic journalism definitions could be interpreted in many ways, and she felt forums are the main difference between traditional and civic journalism.

Jan Schaffer, executive director of the Pew Center for Civic Journalism, defines civic journalism as empowering citizens.

She said, "It's very much a journalism that tries to position citizens as active participants in a self-governing society rather than as passive spectators..."

Discussion/Conclusion

The purpose of Study I was to find out if civic journalism did what it claimed and used more non-elite sources than traditional journalism, and from this study, that cannot be determined. Study II was conducted to find out why, and it shed some light on the conclusions of Study I.

According to the data in Study I, the comparisons provided mixed significance. The mining comparison was consistent with the theory of civic journalism because the civic series used more non-elite sources than the traditional series. The aging comparison showed no significant difference in the use of sourcing.

The research showed that in terms of sources, the *Ventura County Star* traditional series on aging used civic journalism fundamentals but did not claim the practice. *The Charleston Gazette* traditional series did not disprove the claim that traditional journalism does not focus as much on the average citizen and it used mostly elites to complete its news series. *The Herald-Dispatch* civic series on mining and the *Savannah Morning News* civic series on aging did make a point to focus on the non-elites, even if it was just doing a profile on one person and adding elites in for comment or using as many non-elite sources as possible.

The varied significance of the findings could be due to a number of things. Firstly, observing only four newspaper projects limited the data pool. Secondly, the *Ventura County Star's* lead reporter was prone to using average citizens as sources, and the *Savannah Morning News's* reporter based her stories around non-elites, but used less of them; this resulted in a small amount of difference in the number of sources used in the aging comparison. Thirdly, the topics chosen could require more non-elites, or average citizens, as sources. For example, aging may be a topic that cannot be fully covered without a significant amount of non-elites.

The interviews for Study II revealed the intent of the civic writers were not the intent of civic journalism, and the sources used by civic journalists were not chosen based on civic journalism standards. Also, there was confusion on how one defines civic journalism. The interviews showed the purpose and intent behind these news projects, and they also revealed that civic journalists do not have a good grasp of what they are practicing.

The interviews provided good insight about civic journalism's place today. With the Pew Center for Civic Journalism's 10-year program coming to a close May 30, 2003, Schaffer feels they have been successful, and they are "folding their tent." However, the question arises of who will take the baton for civic journalism?

Many of the writers and editors who were interviewed believed civic journalism to be just "good journalism." Therefore, if the civic journalism fundamental of including more average citizens into the dialogue of the story and other fundamentals of the like are being adapted by newsrooms, except maybe for holding public forums, is there a need for civic journalism anymore? Is it ingrained in the newsrooms, or were the projects good attempts but not enough to make a permanent impression?

From this research, I've found that civic journalism has not made a permanent impression on newsrooms because most people do not know exactly what civic journalism is. However, the Pew projects have started a trend of newsrooms stepping out into the community more with forums and meetings, but it comes down to the intent of the newspaper. Also, most newsrooms are promoting the use of more average citizens as sources earlier and more frequently in the story. Although, the movement and purpose of civic journalism has appeared to not share in the glory of increased community interaction by newspapers because the civic movement gets lost in language.

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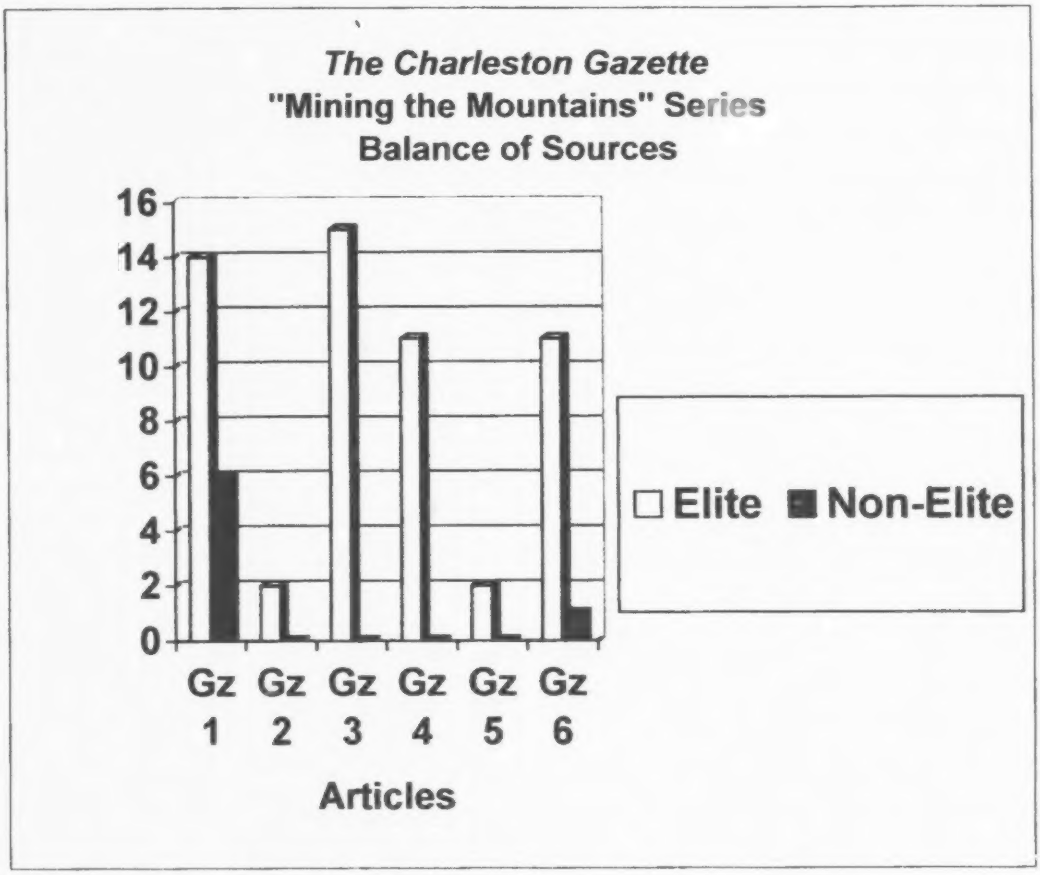
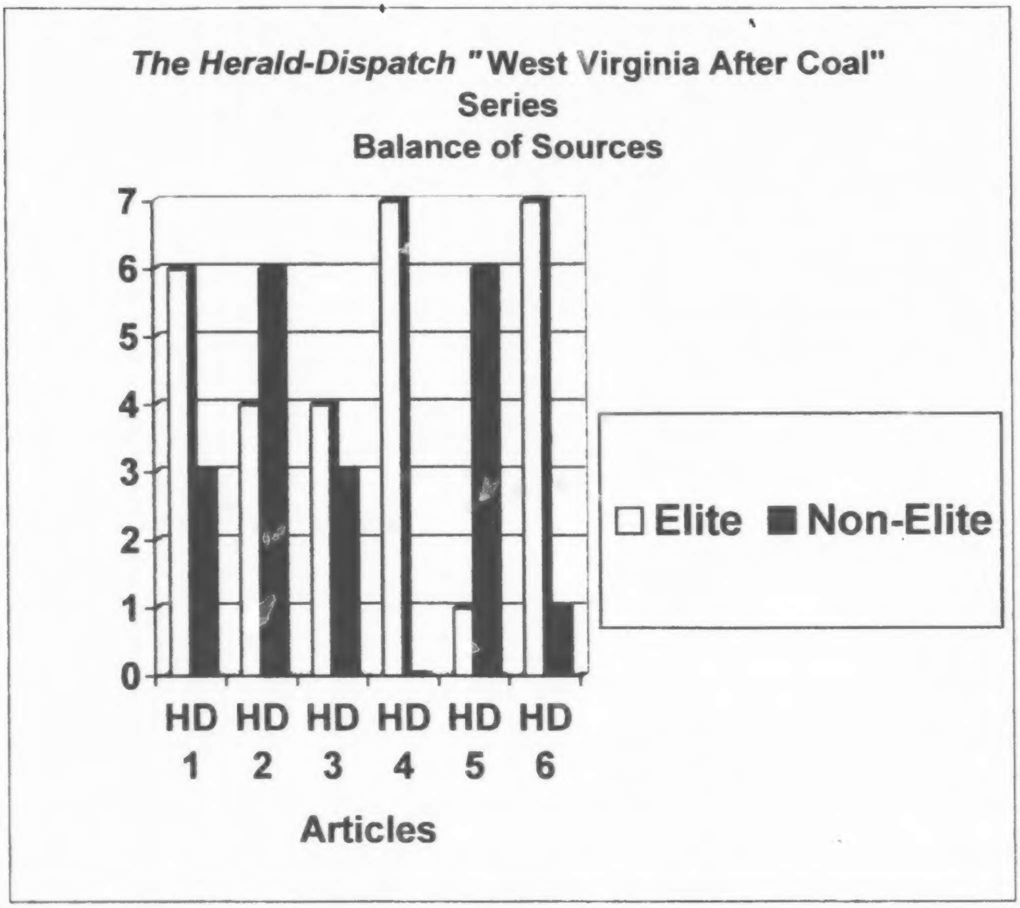
Appendices: 8

Graphs:



	Gz 1	Gz 2	Gz 3	Gz 4	Gz 5	Gz 6
Elite	14	2	15	11	2	11
Non-Elite	6	0	0	0	0	1

BEST COPY AVAILABLE



	HD 1	HD 2	HD 3	HD 4	HD 5	HD 6
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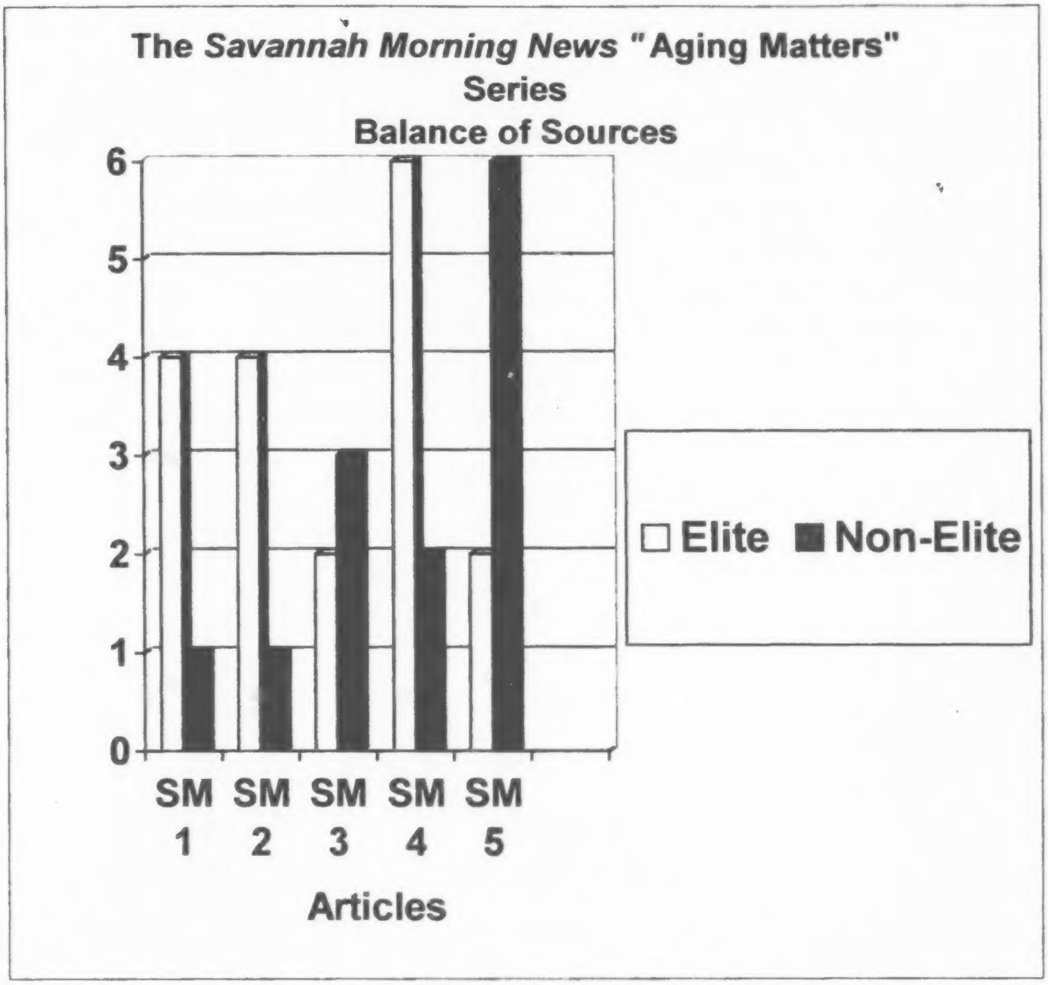
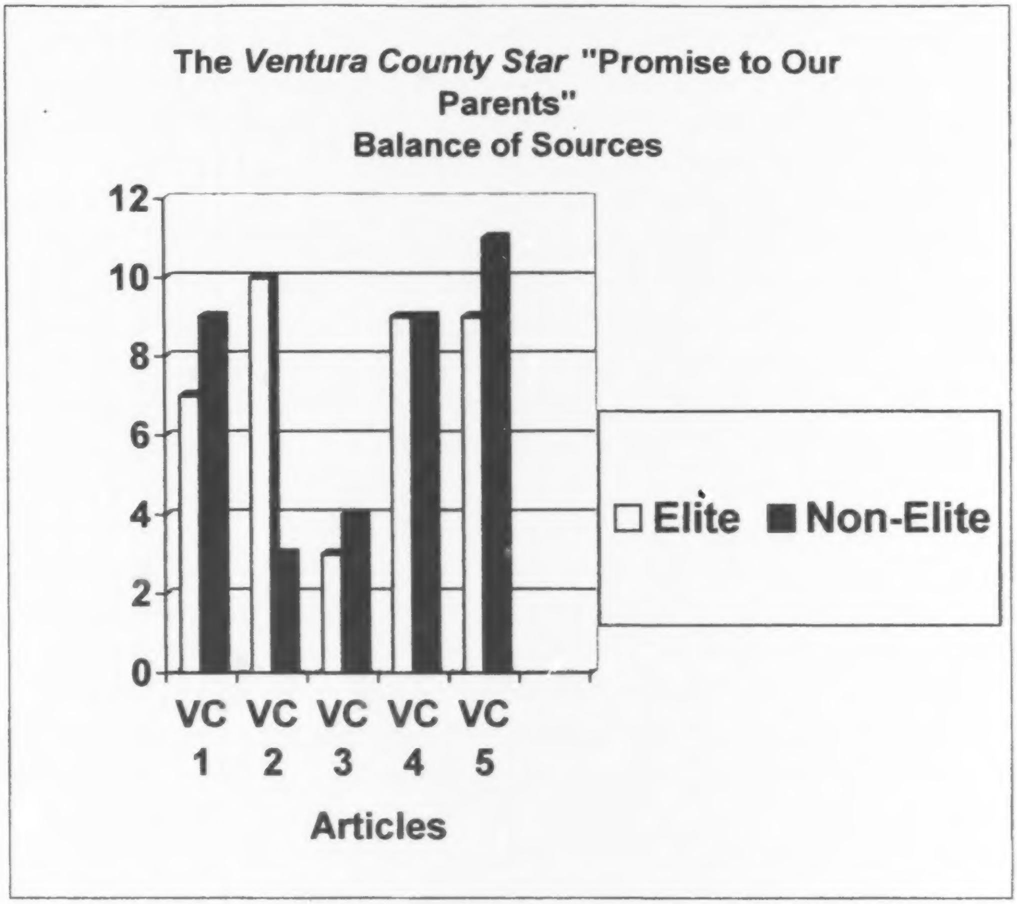
Non-Elite	3	6	3	0	6	1



	SM 1	SM 2	SM 3	SM 4	SM 5
Elite	4	4	2	6	2
Non-Elite	1	1	3	2	6



	VC 1	VC 2	VC 3	VC 4	VC 5
Elite	7	10	3	9	9
Non-Elite	9	3	4	9	11

Calculations:

Chi-Square

Comparison 1

Mining

	Civic	Traditional	Total
Elite	29	55	84
Non-elite	19	7	26
Total	48	62	110

Expected: $E_{ij} = \frac{R_iC_i}{N}$

$\frac{84 \times 48}{110} = 36.65$

$\frac{48 \times 26}{110} = 11.35$

$\frac{62 \times 26}{110} = 14.65$

$\frac{62 \times 84}{110} = 46.35$

$X^2 = \sum \frac{(O_{ij} - E_{ij})^2}{E_{ij}}$

$X^2 = \frac{(29 - 36.65)^2}{36.65} + \frac{(55 - 47.35)^2}{47.35} + \frac{(19 - 11.35)^2}{11.35} + \frac{(7 - 14.65)^2}{14.65}$

$X^2 = 11.9834$

Computer-generated outcomes:

Degrees of freedom: 1
Chi-square = 11.999
p value = 0.00053229
The distribution is significant.

Comparison 2

Aging			
	Civic	**Traditional**	**Total**
Elite	18	38	56
Non-elite	13	36	49
Total	31	74	105

Expected: $E_{ij} = \frac{R_i C_j}{N}$

$$\frac{56 \times 31}{105} = 16.53$$

$$\frac{56 \times 74}{105} = 39.46$$

$$\frac{31 \times 49}{105} = 14.46$$

$$\frac{49 \times 74}{105} = 34.53$$

$$X^2 = \sum \frac{(O_{ij} - E_{ij})^2}{E_{ij}}$$

$$X^2 = \frac{(18 - 16.53)^2}{16.53} + \frac{(13 - 14.46)^2}{14.46} + \frac{(38 - 39.46)^2}{39.46} + \frac{(36 - 34.53)^2}{34.53}$$

$X^2 = .3947$

Computer-generated outcomes:

Degrees of freedom: 1
Chi-square = 0.396
For significance at the .05 level, chi-square should be greater than or equal to 3.84.
The distribution is not significant.
p value = 0.5291622

Phi test

Comparison 1

$\phi = \sqrt{\frac{\chi^2}{N}}$, where

χ^2 = the observed value of the chi square statistic
N = the total sample size for the table

$$\phi = \sqrt{\frac{\chi^2}{N}} = \sqrt{\frac{11.999}{110}} = 0.330$$

$\phi^2 = .1089$

The results show that just over 10% of the variance in the dependent variable can be explained by the independent variable.

Comparison 2

$\phi = \sqrt{\frac{\chi^2}{N}}$, where

χ^2 = the observed value of the chi square statistic
N = the total sample size for the table

$$\phi = \sqrt{\frac{\chi^2}{N}} = \sqrt{\frac{0.396}{105}} = 0.0614$$

$\phi^2 = .0038$

The results show that just over .38% of the variance in the dependent variable can be explained by the independent variable.

Cohen's kappa

Matrix of Agreement, or "Confusion"

	VC-E	VC-NE	SM-E	SM-NE	GZ-E	GZ-NE	Totals
VC-E	7	0	0	0	0	0	7
VC-NE	0	9	0	0	0	0	9
SM-E	0	0	4	0	0	0	4
SM-NE	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
GZ-E	0	0	0	0	13	0	13
GZ-NE	0	0	0	0	1	6	7
Totals	7	9	4	1	14	6	41

Observed agreement $= \frac{40}{41} = .9756$

Expected: $\frac{7 \times 7 + 9 \times 9 + 4 \times 4 + 1 \times 1 + 13 \times 14 + 7 \times 6}{41 \times 41} = \frac{371}{1681} = .2207$

Kappa $= \frac{P_o - P_c}{1 - P_c}$

Kappa $= \frac{.9756 - .2207}{1 - .2207} = \frac{.7549}{.7793} = .9686$ or 96.9% agreement

The portrayal of people with disabilities in prime-time Japanese TV dramas from 1993 to 2002

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Abstract

Using preview issues of *TV Guide*, we analyzed the depiction of people with disabilities in Japanese prime-time television dramas aired on five commercial broadcasting networks between 1993 and 2002. The results showed that only 1.7% of the characters analyzed were disabled: a dramatic under-representation. The study also found that most of the disabled persons depicted were young; there were almost no elderly people with disabilities. Analysis also revealed that Japanese TV dramas focused on certain disabilities. The implications of these findings are also discussed from the perspective of cultivation and the drench hypothesis.

Key words or terms

The media and disability, content analysis, cultivation theory, the drench hypothesis

Introduction

In the final year of the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons (1983-1992), the governments of the Asian and Pacific region declared the years 1993 to 2002 as the Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons, in the hope that major issues faced by disabled persons would be addressed, and the quality of their lives enhanced. In April 1993, the collaborating nations endorsed a proclamation on the full participation and equality of people with disabilities, and also issued an agenda directing action over the next decade.

In Japan, in November 1993, the law pertaining to people with disabilities was revised and renamed "The Disabled Persons Fundamental Law".[1] This revised law, modeled after the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), represented an important extension of the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons. The basic philosophy of the law holds that all persons with disabilities are to be given the opportunity, as members of society, to participate in all spheres of social, economic, and cultural activity.

In March 1993, the Headquarters for Promoting the Welfare of Disabled Persons formulated a new long-term program for government measures concerning disabled persons. In December 1995, it also formulated the Government Action Plan for Persons with Disabilities, an implementation plan for high-priority measures further promoting the new long-term program. The Action Plan, a seven-year strategy running from 1996 to 2002, was aimed at creating a society in which people with disabilities could participate and live fulfilled lives. The issues addressed included housing, education, employment, communication, and broadcasting. The plan was based on the concept of "normalization" – the creation of a society in which people with disabilities live full and active lives in a manner similar to people unencumbered by disabilities. In addition to this plan, various policies were implemented with a view to achieving normalization; and, these policies have met with some success. Consequently, the circumstances of people with disabilities have been improving gradually in recent years. As many critics point out, however, a society in which disabled persons live full and active lives in a manner similar to non-disabled persons has not yet been achieved.

The new long-term program highlights four barriers that impede the achievement of normalization and a barrier-free society: (1) physical barriers (*e.g.*, pubic transportation and other facilities that are not accessible to disabled persons); (2) institutional barriers (*e.g.*, limited qualifications because of disabilities); (3) cultural/information barriers (*e.g.*, lack of braille and sign-language services); and (4) awareness barriers (*e.g.*, regarding disabled persons as being under the protection [patronage] of others). A number of initiatives and planned measures are necessary to eliminate these barriers. It should be noted that, in the program, the government pointed out the importance of mass media in enlightening the general public.

As Tezuka pointed out, negative attitudes toward, and prejudice against, disabled persons are powerful examples of awareness barriers.[2] Research has shown that direct personal contact and exposure to media portrayals can play a significant role in creating positive attitudes toward people with disabilities. Relative values are still being studied, but there is no doubt that mass media can play a crucial role. Positive media portrayals of people with disabilities have helped people without disabilities "to acquire a greater understanding, sensitivity, and comfort with them in the workplace and their personal lives".[3] Similarly, Glauberman concluded that positive portrayals of disabled persons on TV have improved the attitudes and behaviors of children toward disabled peers.[4] Conversely, mass media also has the potential to reinforce negative attitudes toward disabled persons through misinformation and stereotypes.

The current status of people with disabilities in Japan

Shapiro pointed to a lack of expert consensus as to what constitutes disability; and noted that this lack of consensus affects statistical discussions on the number of people with disabilities.[5] In the US, depending on the definition used, figures range from 35 million (1991 estimate from the Institute of Medicine), to 49 million (estimate from the 1994 census), to as many as 120 million (various less restricted estimates).

A similar problem of definition exists in Japan. While a detailed description of arguments concerning the definition of the term is beyond the scope of this paper, we note that *disability* is defined in a narrower sense in Japan than in many other industrial countries. The Disabled Persons Fundamental Law defines people with disabilities as "those whose daily lives or social lives are substantially limited for a long period of time due to physical disabilities, intellectual disabilities, or mental disorders" (Article 2 of the law). Thus, welfare services are intended only for those who suffer "substantially" from disabilities "for a long period of time".

Concrete measures for each type of disability are based on the following three laws: the "Persons with Physical Disabilities Welfare Law", the "Persons with Intellectual Disability Welfare Law"[6] and the "Law Concerning Mental Health and Welfare for Mentally Disabled Persons". The first law defines a physical disability as one of the following: visual impairment, ear-related disability & equilibrium dysfunction, auditory problems, speech &

mastication disabilities, mobility disability, and internal disorders (heart dysfunction, kidney dysfunction, small intestinal dysfunction, bladder or rectal dysfunction, respiratory dysfunction, or immunity dysfunction due to HIV). Depending on how severe the disability, this law makes further classifications as to degree: from first (the most severe) to seventh (the least).

The third law mentioned above defines persons with mental disabilities as "persons with schizophrenia, acute addiction to or dependence on psychoactive substance, intellectual disability, psychotic and other mental illnesses" (Article 5). In the field of mental health, intellectual disability is included in mental disorders, but when it comes to qualification for welfare law, intellectual disability is governed uniquely. In this study, we employ the legal definitions above to compare portrayals of disabled persons in TV dramas with the situation in the real world.[7]

The official estimates for the number of people with disabilities in Japan (thus the figures most often cited in literature) are those periodically reported by the Ministry of Health, Labor, and Welfare (MHLW). These estimates are cited in an annual White Paper on Persons with Disabilities. According to the 2002 White Paper, the total number of people with disabilities came to about 6.02 million (approximately 5% of the total population of Japan). Of these, 3.52 million were people with physical disabilities, 0.46 million were mentally disadvantaged (intellectually disabled), and 2.04 million were affected by mental disorders.[8]

The Survey on the Actual Status of People (both children and adults) with Physical Disabilities, conducted by the MHLW in June 2001, showed that 3.33 million people with physical disabilities *live at home*. Of these, 54.0% have motor disabilities, 25.9% have internal disorders, 10.9% have auditory & speech disabilities, and 9.2% have a sight disability. The survey also showed that 181,000, or 5.4%, had multiple disabilities. People younger than 20 years of age accounted for 2.8% of disabled people; those in their 20s, 30s, 40s, and 50s constituted 2.1, 2.8, 6.4, and 14.1%, respectively. People between the ages of 60 and 64 years constituted 10.9%, and those over 65 accounted for a full 60.2% (0.7% were of unknown age).

With regard to mentally disadvantaged persons, the Basic Survey of the Policy of the Welfare of Children and Adults with Intellectual Disability revealed 0.33 million mentally disadvantaged persons (intellectual disability) *living at home* in 2000. Of these, 33.2% were younger than 20, 24.2% were in their 20s, 15.4% were in t[illegible] 30s, 11.5% were in their 40s, and 11.3% were 50 years of age or older (4.4% were of unknown age).

Unlike those associated with physical and intellectual disabilities, no official survey has focused exclusively on mental disorders. However, the MHLW regularly conducts a Patient Survey (which includes mental illness), and this survey can provide important insight. According to the 1999 survey (cited in the 2002 White Paper), of the 2.04 million mentally ill, 0.34 million were inpatients and 1.70 million lived at home. More detailed information is available in the 1996 Patient Survey.[9] Individuals younger than 35 accounted for 19.9% of this population; those between 35 and 44, 15.3%; those 45 to 54, 20.1%; and those 55 to 64, 18.8%. Individuals 65 or over constituted 25.4% (0.5% were of unknown age). Of these mental disorders, schizophrenia accounted for 30.1%; pre-senile and senile dementia, 4.8%; mood disorders, 22.9%; neurotic disorders, 24.6%; and alcohol dependence and alcoholic psychosis, 2.9%. Other mental disorders constituted 14.6%.

Review of the Literature

Over the last twenty-five years, research on the contribution of television to our perception of social reality has often been guided by cultivation theory.[10] Although many studies concerning cultivation theory deal with perceptions of violence and crime, the theory has also been applied to a wide variety of topics, including sex-role stereotypes,[11] political orientation,[12] and beliefs about racial integration.[13]

According to Gerbner and his associates, cultivation constitutes a gradual, cumulative effect. Cultivation theory postulates that the more time people spend watching television, the more likely it is that their conceptions of social reality will reflect what they see on TV. Gerbner and his associates insisted that the message elements that lead to cultivation are those that cut across most programs and genres, and that audiences watch television in a relatively nonselective fashion. It follows that the amount of television viewed is far more important than what is viewed.[14]

Many researchers, however, disagree with this assumption, and have observed that certain types of program are associated more strongly with cultivation effects than is the total amount of viewing.[15] They also believe that the overall amount of viewing is not the most relevant factor in explaining cultivation effects. This is because these relationships may be "content-specific." Hawkins and Pingree suggested discarding the assumption of message uniformity, and concluded that a measure of exposure to specific genres strengthens rather than weakens cultivation theory.[16]

Greenberg argued that the cultivation model of Gerbner *et al*. is incomplete because one or two particularly salient programs can dramatically affect our perceptions of social reality. He contended that "the portrayals of blacks on the Cosby Show may supersede or even overwhelm the black images derived from many other shows that have some blacks, but in less distinguished, less interesting, and less positive characterizations".[17] He called this idea the *drench hypothesis*.

To address the issue of whether one should use the amount of overall viewing or the amount of specific-genre (or program) viewing as an empirical measure, it is helpful to introduce the notion of levels with respect to television messages. We can divide messages into at least three levels: the program, the genre, and message system levels. At Level 1 (the program level), the characteristics of each program are most salient. Each program (or show) may have its own messages. For example, the messages that viewers receive from NYPD Blue may differ from those of Silk Stalkings despite the fact that both can be categorized as police/detective dramas. Level 2 (the genre level) is intermediate, between the surface and the deeper levels of television messages. Some messages may be similar within a genre, but may differ in terms of genre. Level 3 (the message system level) is the one that Gerbner and his associates assert should be the basis for cultivation theory. Distinguishing between these three levels resolves a number of problems. For example, the cultivation and drench hypotheses are not mutually exclusive: Greenberg's argument focuses on Level 1, whereas Gerbner's cultivation theory pertains to Level 3. Depending on which aspect of perception is being examined, either hypothesis could contribute different information regarding the influence of TV.

Researchers who argue that cultivation effects are content-specific have attempted to demonstrate that effects are more likely to occur at Level 2 than 3. Gerbner and his associates, however, assert that cultivation should refer to the phenomena at work at the deepest level (Level 3). They do not assume that all messages on television are uniform, but contend that cultivation theory should be based on "the most general system of messages, images, and values that underlie and cut across the widest variety of programs".[18]

Two questions arise. First, why do many studies demonstrate stronger effects for measures of genre-level viewing than for total viewing? Perhaps it is because most cultivation measures (dependent variables) have dealt with messages at Level 2, not 3. Studies concerned with messages at Level 2 may be characterized as addressing an extended version of cultivation theory. Evidence suggests that the original theory should be expanded into a more comprehensive theory covering both Levels 2 and 3.

Second, what kinds of messages cut across a variety of programs and genres? Do such messages exist even in the multi-channel age? On this point, Potter suggested that themes such as "Truth wins out" and "Hard work is rewarded" are the most general lessons delivered by television.[19] These themes could be part of the general system of messages in the U.S. television world. We need to make an inventory of cultivation topics that distinguishes messages at Level 2 from those at Level 3, based on comprehensive content analyses.[20]

Media portrayals of people with disabilities. Greenberg and Brand summarized a number of major studies dealing with minorities and the mass media, including studies on the depiction of people with disabilities and their influence on the audience.[21] As Greenberg and Brand's extensive literature review shows, far fewer studies deal with disabilities and the media than with ethnic minorities. They have pointed out that among studies dealing with disability in the media, there has been little agreement as to an operational definition. Thus, we see here the same problem noted previously as affecting the figures on the number of people with disabilities. Gardner and Radel, for example, found that 68% of disabled persons portrayed in the media had physical impairments and 22% were intellectually disabled or had mental disorders.[22] In their study, physical impairments included paraplegia, quadriplegia, blindness, deafness, cerebral palsy, epilepsy, diabetes, and physical deformation. Klobas examined portrayals of blindness, wheelchair users, deafness, amputees, developmental disabilities, small stature, and multiple disabilities in television and film.[23]

As for prime-time television, Elliot and Byrd noted that people with disabilities were depicted, predominantly, as belonging to lower SES groups, and as unemployed, single, and victims of abuse.[24] Donaldson found that people with disabilities were never seen in the background as shoppers, spectators, or workers.[25]

Greenberg and Brand categorized the relevant literature into three groups: (1) studies that "count the presence or absence of minorities in media content and compare these head counts with those found for other minorities and for the majority"; (2) those that "typically attempt to assess whether the presence of a minority is of major or minor significance when compared with majority role holders"; and (3) studies that deal with "the extent to which those minorities are like or unlike majority characters on the same show, and further, the manner and frequency with which the minority characters interact with the majority characters".[26] This paper may be categorized as a mixture of the first and second types.

Considering the importance of television in our society, we need to investigate the ways in which TV portrays persons with disabilities. How often do disabled persons appear in TV dramas? When they appear, are they major characters or minor ones? What about their ages and sexes? Do they have occupations? What types of disability are most likely to be depicted? We addressed these questions in this study.

Method

In this study, we analyzed serial dramas and drama series (those occurring four times or more and exceeding 30 min. in length) aired during prime time (between 1900 and 2300) on five commercial broadcasting networks between January 1993 and December 2002. We analyzed only modern drama series and excluded 'Samurai' dramas, because their setting is pre-19th century, which is quite different from a modern setting. We also excluded dramas aired on the NHK channels, because *TV Guide* did not provide the necessary details for all network programming.

We scanned preview issues of *TV Guide*. Greenberg and Collette[27] demonstrated the usefulness of using preview issues of this periodical in conducting a content analysis as "a parsimonious means for an examination over time of new-season characters".[28] This method has an important advantage in terms of enabling a census (examining all relevant programs). As Greenberg and Collette pointed out, content analytic studies using random sampling (*e.g.*, analyzing TV programs of randomly selected weeks) "cannot eliminate the possibility of idiosyncratic findings attributable to the vagaries of network scheduling".[29] Furthermore, they also pointed out that, "a cross-check with other sources confirmed that the Fall Preview issue provides an accurate account of new season television shows and their primary characters".[30]

Although the *TV Guide* used in this study was a Japanese version, not the English one that Greenberg and Collette analyzed, we believe that its usefulness is comparable. Japanese

TV Guide publishes four preview issues a year, because Japanese TV dramas have four "new seasons". Thus, we analyzed a total of 40 preview issues. As a double-check mechanism, we also scanned preview issues of *The Television*, another major TV information magazine. We used *TV Guide* as the primary information source, and used *The Television* mainly for confirmation.

Preview issues provide useful information on dramas (*e.g.*, explanations regarding upcoming drama series). Most importantly, they illustrate interpersonal relations among primary and secondary characters (usually seven to nine persons are listed) using a chart, with brief descriptions of each character. Based mainly on the information provided in the charts, we scanned listings to determine whether disabled persons appeared (either as major or minor characters) in each of the programs (the unit of analysis was each character).[31]

When disabled persons were found in a description, we also made a note of the character's sex, age, occupation, type of disability, and whether the character was major or minor. Sex was determined through pictorial content and name. In most cases, information on age was provided in the charts. Information on occupation was occasionally provided in the charts or accompanying text descriptions. Unfortunately, there were many characters of unknown occupation. In this study, we defined a major (leading or primary) character as the most important person in the program. When it was difficult to identify a single leading character from the information on a chart or the text description, we chose up to two major characters in the program. Any characters not identified as major characters were treated as minor ones.

Two trained coders conducted the analysis independently. Since the coding categories were relatively simple (except for the variable of whether a character was disabled), inter-coder reliability was high. The coefficients of agreement were as follows: sex 1.00, age .98, occupation .93, type of disability .90, and whether the character was major or minor .93.

In several cases it was difficult to assess whether a character was actually disabled (*i.e.*, vague or ambiguous descriptions were used such as "he has heart disease", "she was mentally injured", or "he is slightly autistic"). In these cases, we first put the characters on a candidate list, and then studied the text descriptions of non-preview issues and/or watched the programs on videotape, when available.[32]

We also collected data on audience ratings for all the programs in which people with disabilities appeared. The average household rating for each program was provided by *Video Research Ltd.* (a company that conducts TV audience ratings research).

Results

Analysis showed that people with disabilities were shown on a limited number of TV programs between 1993 and 2002 (See Table 1). We analyzed 607 serial dramas or drama series that aired on commercial TV broadcasting networks. Of these, disabled persons appeared in 67 (11.0%). As shown in Table 1, a total of 81 persons with disabilities were portrayed in these programs. Twenty-eight of these (34.6%) were major characters. As mentioned earlier, charts showing interpersonal relationships in TV information magazines typically list between seven and nine characters (major and minor). Our analysis revealed that 4899 characters had been listed in the charts of *TV Guide* during the previous 10 years. Thus, only 1.7% of these characters were disabled (some fluctuation occurred, but percentages never exceeded 3%). By contrast, about 5% of the total population of Japan is disabled. Clearly, people with disabilities are underrepresented in TV dramas.

As shown in Table 2, of the 81 characters with disabilities, the most frequently depicted was mobility disability: 17 persons were so depicted and 7 of them were wheelchair users. The second most frequently depicted disability was intellectual (12 persons from six programs). Notably, one serial drama *Seija no koushin* (The March of Saints) depicted the lives of six persons with intellectual disabilities. The third most frequently depicted disability was visual impairment: 10 persons were portrayed as blind and one as having poor vision. Auditory & speech impairments followed (9 persons) and persons with heart dysfunction were next (7 persons). Television dramas rarely depicted certain disabilities; characters with internal disorders other than heart dysfunction rarely appeared. In the real world, approximately 30% of people with mental disorders are schizophrenic, but this illness was virtually nonexistent in the TV dramas. By contrast, people with visual impairments or intellectual disabilities appeared relatively often.

With regards to gender portrayal, Iwao found that the ratio of male to female characters (most were non-disabled) in dramatic programs was 7 to 3.[33] Therefore, male characters outnumbered female characters in TV dramas. However, the number of female characters with disabilities was more than double that of males (55 female characters vs. 26 male characters). Even considering only physical disabilities, female characters outnumbered males. In the real world, however, the ratio of males to females among people with physical disabilities is 54.8 to 43.9. Thus, male disabled persons were severely under-represented.

As for age, most people with disabilities portrayed in dramas were teenagers or in their 20s (59 out of 81 disabled persons, 72.8%). Nearly two-thirds of the major characters with disabilities (18 out of 28) were in their 20s (See Table 3); only nine were over 40 years old, and only four (minor characters) were over 60. This skew towards younger people is also found among TV drama characters in general,[34] and the tendency is much stronger for the disabled. In the real world, however, disabilities are far more common among the elderly.

Table 4 compares disability figures in the real world with those in the TV dramas, by age and type of disability. Younger people with disabilities were clearly over-represented and older people with disabilities were conspicuously under-represented. Note that approximately 85% of the population with physical disabilities are 50 or over, while only 4.5% of TV characters with physical disabilities fell into the same age group. Only about 20% of people with mental disorders are younger than 35, but nearly 70% of such characters were of this age. This heavy skew toward younger persons clearly suggests that TV distorts reality.

Unlike Elliot and Byrd's[35] finding that people with disabilities were depicted as belonging to lower SES groups and unemployed predominantly, we found that many characters had occupations. While there were many characters of unknown occupation, only a few were depicted as being apparently unemployed. Thirteen of the 81 characters with disabilities were under 18 years old with no occupation given. Another five characters were students. Of the remaining 63 characters with disabilities, 35 had some occupation: Five characters were detectives, three were nurses, and some were depicted as having special talents, like painters and artists.

Television dramas achieving average audiences greater than 15% are usually regarded as successful by Japanese media industry.[36] We found that 25 programs met this standard, and many of the dramas in which disabled persons appeared enjoyed relatively high ratings. This was true despite their relative rarity. This suggests that these dramas have a greater than average effect on viewers.

Discussion

We found that, over the period studied; a mere 1.7% of TV-drama characters (major and minor) had disabilities. About five percent of the total population, by contrast, is actually disabled, demonstrating the degree of under-representation. We also found that most disabled characters in dramas were young; and that there were hardly any elderly people with disabilities in these dramas – they were symbolically annihilated. When portrayed, such characters were reduced to unflattering characterizations. The results also showed that in dramas, women were more likely to be disabled than men, contrary to actual demographics.

Following the logic of Gerbner *et al.*,[37] we suggest that such under-representative or unrepresentative portrayals may cultivate distorted perceptions of disabled people. Heavy viewers of TV dramas may be less likely to recognize that disabilities are much more common in the elderly, or they might erroneously conclude that disabilities are more common among females than males.

In addition, these dramas rarely depicted certain disabilities, focusing instead on intellectual disabilities, blindness, hearing & speech impairment, wheelchair use, and heart dysfunction. This might be a result of the inherent nature of television: the medium requires visual images. For example, internal disorders (with the exception of heart dysfunction) are regarded as relatively difficult to portray. By contrast, intellectual disability, visual impairments such as blindness, hearing impairment, and wheelchair use are much easier to visualize. After analyzing images of disabled people appearing in advertising in the US and Great Britain, Haller and Ralph concluded that the images in ads focused on wheelchair use and deafness, *i.e.*, advertising took the easiest route in showing disability.[38] While the disabilities shown on Japanese TV dramas are not the same as those that Haller and Ralph found in advertisements, we believe that the same logic (the "easy way out") serves to determine the images used in dramas.

As Greenberg's drench hypothesis predicts, one or two particularly salient programs might dramatically affect our perceptions of disability and disabled persons. For example, a serial drama called *Aishiteiru to ittekure* (Please Say "I Love You"), which was aired in 1995 and had a relatively high audience rating of 21.3%, included a deaf major character. Many have pointed out that this drama strongly influenced the image of deaf persons among the non-disabled. The drama even resulted in a boom in the use of sign language in Japan.[39] Another serial drama called *Byutifuru raifu* (Beautiful Life), which aired in 2000, had a very high average audience rating of 32.3%. The final episode had a rating of 41.3% (the second highest among all dramas aired between 1977 and 2002). The drama's leading character used a wheelchair, and it seems plausible that this drama would have had a significant impact on viewers' perceptions of wheelchair users. *Seija no koushin* (The March of Saints) also enjoyed a high audience rating (20.9%). The drama, however, was severely criticized by many, including the disabled, for misinforming viewers and creating biased images of persons with intellectual disabilities.

Since this study did not conduct any research into effect, we can only speculate as to what effect TV portrayals might have from the perspective of the cultivation or drench hypotheses. Whatever their influence might be, it seems inescapable that mass media shapes our perception of social reality.

Limitations of this study. This study focused only on characters listed in charts provided by TV information magazines. In actuality, many more characters appeared in most of the dramas that we examined, but their roles were much smaller. It is likely that these minor roles included some disabled characters that were not included in this study.

The breadth of this study was insufficient to allow in-depth analyses of all the disabled characters. While using preview issues has a number of merits, it also has limitations. For more detailed analyses, one would need to view the actual programs themselves (unfortunately, not all dramas are available on videotape). By employing a more "traditional" content analytic method, future studies should, among other things, examine whether disabled persons are portrayed positively or negatively, the extent to which disabled characters are like or unlike non-disabled characters on the same show, and the manner and frequency with which the disabled characters interact with the non-disabled characters.

This study did not examine TV dramas on NHK (a public broadcaster); *TV Guide* does not provide the necessary information (*i.e.*, a chart) for most NHK programs. However, Japan has a dual television broadcasting system that consists of NHK and a number of commercial broadcasters. Japanese broadcasting enjoys well-balanced competition between these broadcasters. A parallel analysis of NHK dramas would be desirable in the future.[40]

Despite the limitations described, this study made some important discoveries. As few dramas portray disabilities, representations of disabilities and disabled persons, especially in programs with high audience ratings, may significantly influence viewers. If this is the case, we need to carefully monitor the images associated with disability. Naturally, people do not rely solely on television to obtain information. Some people have direct, daily experience with disabled persons. Individuals also have interpersonal channels, such as interactions with family or friends at school, work, or in community meetings. It seems reasonable to say, however, that television's role in an individual's construction of social reality is far more important than conventionally thought. To achieve normalization, we should continue to scrutinize the role of the media, especially television.

Notes

1. Disabilities included under the law are classified as physical, intellectual, or mental. The Disabled Persons Fundamental Law is the first law that officially recognizes people with mental disorders as disabled persons.
2. Naoki Tezuka, *The Welfare of People with Disabilities (in Japanese)*. (Tokyo: Mineruba, 2002), 106.
3. Olan Farnall and Kim A. Smith, "Reactions to People with Disabilities: Personal Contact versus Viewing of Specific Media Portrayals", *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly*, 76 (winter 1999): 659-672.
4. Nancy R. Glauberman, "The Influence of Positive T.V. Portrayals on Children's Behavior and Attitude toward the Physically Disabled" (Ph.D. diss., Columbia University Teachers College, 1980).
5. Joseph P. Shapiro, *No Pity: People with Disabilities Forging a New Civil Rights Movement* (New York: Times Books, 1994).
6. Instead of "mental retardation", the term "intellectual disability" has been used since 1999.
7. There is no official definition of intellectual disability in any relevant laws. Nevertheless, counseling centers for persons with intellectual disability have their own criteria to assess whether a person is intellectually disabled and to define severity.
8. Cabinet Office, *White Paper on People with Disabilities (in Japanese)*. (Tokyo: Printing Bureau, Ministry of Finance, 2002). Strictly speaking, simply adding together the number of people with any one of the three types of disabilities might be misleading, as there are individuals with multiple disabilities. For the sake of simplicity, however, we do simply sum these figures, as there are no official data showing the number of persons with

multiple disabilities. While the number of people with disabilities has gradually increased over time, according to the 2002 *White Paper*, there has not been a remarkable change over the past ten years.

9. Zenkaren (The National Federation of Families with the Mentally Ill in Japan), *The Present Condition [State] of People with Mental Disorders in Japan based on National Statistics (in Japanese)*, (Tokyo: Zenkaren, 2000).
10. George Gerbner, Larry Gross, Michael Morgan, and Nancy Signorielli, "Living with Television: The Dynamics of the Cultivation Process", in *Perspectives on Media Effects*, ed. Jennings Bryant and Dolf Zillmann, (Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1986), 17-48; Gerbner, Gross, Morgan, and Signorielli, "Growing up with Television: The Cultivation Perspective", in *Media Effects: Advances in Theory and Research*, ed. Jennings Bryant and Dolf Zillmann, (Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1994), 17-41.
11. Michael Morgan, "Television and Adolescents' Sex-role Stereotypes: A Longitudinal Study", *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 43 (November 1982), 947-955; Nancy Signorielli, "Television and Conceptions about Sex Roles: Maintaining Conventionality and the Status Quo", *Sex Roles*, 21(August 1989), 337-356.
12. Gerbner, Gross, Morgan, and Signorielli, "Charting the Mainstream: Television's Contribution to Political Orientation", *Journal of Communication*, 32 (spring 1982), 100-127.
13. Paula W. Matabane, "Television and the Black Audience: Cultivating Moderate Perspectives on Racial Integration", *Journal of Communication*, 38 (autumn, 1988), 21-31.
14. Gerbner, Gross, Morgan, and Signorielli, "Living with Television"; Gerbner, Gross, Morgan, and Signorielli, "Growing up with Television."

15. See, for example, Robert P. Hawkins and Suzanne Pingree, "Uniform Content and Habitual Viewing: Unnecessary Assumptions in Social Reality Effects", *Human Communication Research*, 7 (summer 1981): 291-301; W. James Potter and IK. Chin Chang, "Television Exposure Measures and the Cultivation Hypothesis", *Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media*, 34 (summer 1990): 313-333.

16. Hawkins and Pingree, "Uniform Content and Habitual Viewing".

17. Bradley S. Greenberg, "Some Uncommon Television Images and the Drench Hypothesis", in *Television as a Social Issue*, ed. S. Oskamp (Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications, 1988), 98.

18. Gerbner, Gross, Morgan, and Signorielli, "Living with Television", 20.

19. W. James Potter, "Adolescents' Perceptions of the Primary Values of Television Programming", *Journalism Quarterly*, 67 (winter 1990), 843-851.

20. The world of television in the late 60s and early 70s certainly had the appearance of being a monolith. There were no video stores, no cable TV, as we presently know it, no DBS, and no Internet to compete as symbolic resources. In addition, the industry itself was dominated by the oligarchic structure of three networks in the US. None of this is true any longer. The introduction of multi-channel CATV and DBS has provided viewers with a wide selection of channels. The number of channels available in the average home has increased greatly. Consequently, it is getting increasingly difficult to imagine that there is a single coherent world of television.

21. Bradley S. Greenberg and Jeffrey Brand, "Minorities and the Mass Media: 1970s to 1990s", in *Media Effects: Advances in Theory and Research*, ed. Jennings Bryant and Dolf Zillmann, (Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1994), 273-314.

22. James M. Gardner and Michael S. Radel, "Portrait of the Disabled in the Media", *Journal of Community Psychology*, 6 (July 1978), 269-274.

23. Lauri E. Klobas, *Disability Drama in Television and Film* (Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland, 1988).

24. Timothy R. Elliot and E. Keith Byrd, "Media and Disability", *Rehabilitation Literature*, 43(11-12, 1982), 348-355.

25. John Donaldson, "The Visibility and Image of Handicapped People on Television", *Exceptional Children*, 47(March 1981), 413-16.

26. Greenberg and Brand, "Minorities and the Mass Media", 275-76.

27. Bradley S. Greenberg and Larry Collette, "The Changing Faces on TV: A Demographic Analysis of Network Television's New Seasons, 1966-1992", *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, 41 (winter 1997), 1-13.

28. Greenberg and Collette, "The Changing Faces on TV", 2.

29. Greenberg and Collette, "The Changing Faces on TV", 2.

30. Greenberg and Collette, "The Changing Faces on TV", 2.

31. *TV Guide* does not provide information in chart form for all dramas. We excluded dramas without such information from our analysis. The number of dramas without charts was small (40 programs).

32. There were still two cases in which we could not determine whether a character was actually disabled. We excluded those characters from the candidate list. When a character with a disability was found in a program and not listed in a chart, we omitted that person from our analysis. To illustrate, in a particular drama series, in the final episode, the primary character suffered paralysis of the lower half of the body. This, however, was not

spelled out in the chart, and we learned of this disability from the text description in a non-preview issue. We did not analyze this character.

33. Sumiko Iwao, *Messages of Television Dramas: Social Psychological Analysis (in Japanese)* (Tokyo: Keiso Shobo, 2000), 102.
34. Iwao, *Messages of television dramas*, 103.
35. Elliot and Byrd, "Media and Disability"
36. Naturally, such standards may change over time. According to one TV-industry specialist (personal communication), other standards have been used in recent years: a minimum rating of 13% is required for drama series to survive, and 18% is regarded as acceptable.
37. Gerbner, Gross, Morgan, and Signorielli, "Living with Television"; Gerbner, Gross, Morgan, and Signorielli, "Growing up with Television"
38. Beth Haller and Sue Ralph, "Profitability, Diversity, and Disability Images in Advertising in the United States and Great Britain", *Disability Studies Quarterly*, 21, (Spring 2001); Available at http://www.cds.hawaii.edu/DSQ/issues/page02.asp?dsqID=3.
39. Miho Iwakuma, "From Pity to Pride: People with Disabilities, the Media, & an Emerging Disability Culture" (paper presented at the annual meeting of the AEJMC, Chicago, 1997).
40. Young people tend to watch programs (including dramas) that air on commercial broadcasting stations, whereas older people are more likely to watch NHK programs. Thus, analyzing TV dramas on commercial broadcasting stations is of great significance, especially when considering their impact on the younger generation.

Table 1

Numbers of TV drama series with disabled persons and characters with disabilities by year

	TV drama series or serial dramas			Characters		
Year	(a) Number of TV drama series	(b) Dramas with disabled persons	(b)/(a)× 100	(c) Number of characters in the charts	(d) Number of characters with disabilities*	(d)/(c)× 100
1993	49	3	6.1%	401	3 (1)	0.7%
1994	62	6	9.7%	515	7 (0)	1.4%
1995	62	9	14.5%	515	11 (4)	2.1%
1996	58	7	12.1%	459	7 (4)	1.5%
1997	60	4	6.7%	451	4 (1)	0.9%
1998	68	10	14.7%	513	15 (4)	2.9%
1999	71	4	5.6%	541	4 (1)	0.7%
2000	62	11	17.7%	540	14 (7)	2.6%
2001	57	5	8.8%	481	6 (3)	1.2%
2002	58	8	13.8%	483	10 (3)	2.1%
Total	607	67	11.0%	4899	81 (28)	1.7%

*Numbers in parentheses represent major characters.

Table 2

Types of disability that appeared in TV dramas

Type of disability	**N (%)**
Mobility disabilities (including 7 wheelchair users)	17 (20.5)
Intellectual disability	12 (14.5)
Visual impairment	11 (13.3)
Auditory & speech impairments	9 (10.8)
Unspecified mental disorders	8 (9.6)
Heart dysfunction	7 (8.4)
Autism (including one high autism)	4 (4.8)
Dementia (including two persons with Alzheimer's disease)	4 (4.8)
Neurotic disorders (including two persons with PTSD)	4 (4.8)
Multiple personality disorder	4 (4.8)
Mood disorders	2 (2.4)
Immunity dysfunction due to HIV	1 (1.2)
Multiple disabilities (included above)	2 (2.4)
Total[1]	83 (100.0)

[1] A total of 81 persons with disabilities were portrayed in the programs analyzed, although two characters had multiple disabilities: One character was blind and a wheelchair user; the other was blind and intellectually disabled. These two characters were counted twice, resulting in the total of 83 in the table.

Table 3

Number of characters with disabilities by age and sex

	Less than 20	20s	30s	40 or over	Total
	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)
Major characters	2 (7.1)	18 (64.3)	7 (25.0)	1 (3.6)	28 (100)
Males	0 (0.0)	5 (55.6)	3 (33.3)	1 (11.1)	9 (100)
Females	2 (10.5)	13 (68.4)	4 (21.1)	0 (0.0)	19 (100)
Minor characters	19 (35.8)	20(37.7)	6 (11.3)	8 (15.1)	53 (100)
Males	8 (47.1)	6 (35.3)	1 (5.9)	2 (11.8)	17 (100)
Females	11 (30.6)	14 (38.9)	5 (13.9)	6 (16.7)	36 (100)
Total	21 (25.9)	38 (46.9)	14 (17.3)	9 (11.1)	81 (100)

Table 4

Comparison of percentage of disabled persons on TV and percentage in real world by age and type of disability

	Less than 20	**20s**	**30s**	**40s**	**50 and over**	**Total**
Physical disabilities	% (n)	% (n)	% (n)	% (n)	% (n)	% (n)
Real world[1]	2.8 (93)	2.1 (70)	2.8 (93)	6.4 (213)	85.2 (2,835)	100.0 (3,327)
TV dramas	38.6 (17)	38.6 (17)	9.1 (4)	9.1 (4)	4.5 (2)	100.0 (44)
Intellectual disability	% (n)	% (n)	% (n)	% (n)	% (n)	% (n)
Real world[2]	33.2 (109,200)	24.2 (79,800)	15.4 (50,700)	11.5 (37,700)	11.3 (37,300)	100.0 (329,200)
TV dramas	31.3 (5)	62.5 (10)	6.3 (1)	0.0 (0)	0.0 (0)	100.0 (16)
	Less than 35	**35~44**	**45~54**	**55~64**	**65 and over**	**Total**
Mental disorders	% (n)	% (n)	% (n)	% (n)	% (n)	% (n)
Real world[3]	19.9 (376,995)	15.3 (288,884)	20.1 (381,012)	18.8 (355,034)	25.4 (480,763)	100.0 (1891,205)
TV dramas	72.7 (16)	13.6 (3)	4.5 (1)	0.0 (0)	9.1 (2)	100.0 (22)

[1] Source: The Survey on the Actual Status of People (both children and adults) with Physical Disabilities, conducted by the MHLW in 2001. Figures represent people with physical disabilities *living at home*. The ages of 0.7% (2,300) were unknown. Units of 10,000 people.

[2] Source: The Basic Survey of the Policy of the Welfare of Children (Adults) with Intellectual Disability, conducted by the MHLW in 2000. Figures represent people with intellectual disabilities *living at home*. The ages of 4.4% (14,400) were unknown.

[3] Source: The Patient Survey conducted by the MHLW in 1996. Figures represent people with mental disorders with the exception of children/adults with intellectual disabilities. The ages of 0.5% (8,518) were unknown.

Running with Ritalin:

Magazine Portrayals of Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder

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Running with Ritalin:

Magazine Portrayals of Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder

Abstract

This study examines how *Time*, *Newsweek*, and *U.S. News and World Report* have portrayed attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder. Magazine text was content analyzed for article length, description of the symptoms of attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder, sources quoted in the text, treatment methods suggested, and content conceivably leading to a biased understanding of the disorder. The study finds that news magazine coverage has increased dramatically over the past 14 years, with medicinal treatments such as Ritalin most commonly suggested. Rarely mentioned have been the side effects of medicinal treatment and alternative treatment methods.

Running with Ritalin:

Magazine Portrayals of Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder

Since its addition to the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (DSM-III) in 1980, attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) has been somewhat controversial (for example, Robison, et al., 1999). Proponents of its official recognition argue that it has allowed millions of children the opportunity to receive help in correcting a problem that was previously thought to be laziness or irresponsibility. Critics, on the other hand, suggest that ADHD is simply psychologists' way of attaching a label to the normal characteristics of childhood. Still others argue that ADHD is a true psychological disorder, yet it is being over-diagnosed because medicating a child is easier than attempting to use conventional techniques that require large amounts of effort. Indeed, as the *New York Times* reported in January, 2003, scholars recently found that the number of children taking psychiatric drugs more than doubled from 1987 to 1996. As Goode (2003) wrote in the *Times* report, the numbers demonstrate quite clearly an increasing reliance on medicines as the "treatment of choice."

In the past 15 years, then, there has been great deliberation, especially through American mass media, as to the existence of ADHD and which treatments for the disorder are most effective. It is difficult to determine whether media coverage influences the prevalence of diagnoses, and doctors need not release diagnosis rates because ADHD is not an infectious disease. Yet, awareness of the disorder and the number of children who receive treatment have shown marked increases, and in light of differing opinions about ADHD, the current study seeks to identify any dominant themes and assumptions associated with the disorder. The study examines the amount of coverage ADHD has received as well as its fundamental portrayal in three prominent American news magazines: *Time*, *Newsweek*, and *U.S. News and World Report*. The study is grounded theoretically in the agenda setting and building effects of mass media (McCombs & Shaw, 1972; Lang & Lang, 1983), which suggest that media (a) tell news consumers what to think about with regard to unobtrusive issues, and (b) frame those issues in a certain manner. Because consumers may act based on what they read in established media outlets, it becomes important to study the content to which they are exposed.

Before addressing mediated portrayals, some history of ADHD is necessary, for what has been studied and discovered by medical professionals and trained scientists may prove somewhat different than what media outlets report for common knowledge. What all camps might acknowledge is that an increasing number of children are being diagnosed with ADHD. The closest estimates state that 1.6 million 6- to 11- year olds have attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (Centers for Disease Control [CDC] study, 2002, p. 3), which is equivalent to seven percent of the youth population. While medical treatment of ADHD is sought most often in the first few years of school (Robison, Sclar, Skaer, & Galin, 1999, p. 209), it remains a difficult diagnosis for most medical professionals. The criteria for the diagnosis are ambiguous, and because no definitive tests have been developed, doctors and psychologists are forced to use their best judgements when diagnosing patients. Core symptoms of ADHD include inattentiveness, impulsiveness, and/or hyperactivity (Robison et al., 1999, p. 209). Inattentiveness is most commonly defined as difficulty in concentrating, following directions, or finishing a task; hyperactivity is often labeled by fidgeting, interrupting others, excessive talking, and leaving one's seat in school (*American Family Physician,* 2002, p. 831).

Because the boundaries for this disorder are so blurred, one published CDC study (2002) identifies the concern that ADHD is over diagnosed among children who have regular access to health care (p. 3). According to this report, while those who have regular contact with physicians are being over diagnosed, those individuals who have limited or no access to health care are remaining undiagnosed. Among those who are diagnosed with ADHD, there are two primary means of treatment, including pharmacotherapy, such as methylphenidates and amphetamines, and behavioral interventions (Robison et al., 1999, p. 209). In their report, Robison et al. (1999) acknowledged that in recent years, pharmacological treatment of ADHD has dramatically increased, and that this type of treatment remains controversial because there exists a concern over long-term stimulant medication use in children (p. 209). The patients originally most diagnosed with this disorder were Caucasian males between the ages of nine and twelve (Robison et al., 1999, p. 209). However, in the last few years, the criteria for diagnosis have shifted from simply hyperactivity toward inattention and impulsivity, which may explain why the rates of diagnosis among female youths have risen (Robison et al., 1999, p. 209).

The use of methylphenidates as a method of treatment for ADHD has dramatically increased in the last decade. Research conducted by Robison et al. (1999) suggests that the percentage of patients diagnosed with ADHD increased 3.2-fold. In addition, over a six-year time frame, methylphenidate accounted for 87.6% of all medications prescribed (p. 212). Robison et al. (1999) stated several possible reasons for the increasing trend in ADHD diagnoses, noting that greater public and physician awareness and/or acceptance of this condition, combined with the acceptance of a broader case definition, can be attributed to higher ADHD diagnosis rates (1999, p. 215).

The concern over medicinal treatment for ADHD has arisen because it appears to some professionals that this "is the latest 'fad diagnosis'," (Soumerai, 1990, p. 783), and the use of methylphenidate stimulants in children can have adverse effects. While some individuals who are treated with stimulant medication experience common side effects of decreased appetite and insomnia (Barkley, McMurray, Edelbrock, & Robbins, 1990, p. 184), the use of methylphenidates in children who do not require it can produce side effects including hyperactivity, psychosis, hallucinosis, growth disturbances, tic disorders, and other movement problems (Volkmar, Hoder, & Cohen, 1985, p. 129). An even greater problem, according to Volkmar et al. (1985), is that patients are put at risk not only for potentially adverse effects, but also because oftentimes underlying problems are not addressed (p. 130). An example of the danger of misdiagnosis and treatment can be explained by a chart audit in which the records of 68 children diagnosed with attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder were examined in a study conducted by Soumerai (1990). It appears that up to one-half of the children being treated with psychostimulants may not have ever had the disorder in the first place (p. 783). There have been instances in which patients have refused the medicinal treatment options suggested by their physicians. Reasons for this refusal can be attributed to parents who are warned of drugs by the media, teachers, pharmacists, physicians, psychologists, or other experts, side effects that are not acceptable to either the parents or the child, and children who do not wish to take medication because they have been warned of drugs in school (Eichlseder, 1985, p. 180).

In addition, many parents of ADHD youths decided not to medicate their children because of concerns about possible side effects as reported by the media during the anti-Ritalin media blitz from 1987 to 1990 (Safer, 1996, p. 1086). During the late 1980s and early 1990s, there was great concern over the negative long-term effects produced by methylphenidates. However, as the fear of adverse effects from methylphenidates subsided, the media's portrayal of these drugs shifted. Safer (1996) noted that "major magazines and newspapers which had carried anti-Ritalin stories during the media blitz exhibited a far more positive perspective on the subject 5 years later" (p. 1086). Similarly, in 1999, Robison et al. stated that there had been an increased focus on attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder by the lay and medical press (p. 209). The portrayals of methylphenidates and ADHD appear to be drastically different now than they were ten years ago. To understand fully the impact that the changing attitudes toward ADHD and Ritalin have had, one must also examine media portrayals.

Debate has existed for years as to the effects that media have on consumers, and in the early 1970s McCombs and Shaw (1972) introduced agenda-setting theory, which has shaped more than 100 studies since that time. While it is recognized that media have some influence on people's attitudes, behaviors, and cognitions, based on studies such as those conducted by McCombs and Shaw, the exact effects of this influence can only be theorized. Pfau and King (1993) suggested that "individual uses of the media act as an intervening variable: mitigating or enhancing the ultimate effects of a media message" (p. 182). Similarly, media exposure can become an integral part of an individual's social interactions and environment (Pfau and King). Media involvement, in short, has the ability to be highly influential in determining an individual's attitudes, especially with respect to unobtrusive issues. Most studies show that, for most people, media serve as major forms of information and have substantial effects on lifestyles (Chesterfield-Evans, 1988, p. 44).

The ways in which people use the information provided by media to interact with others is also a determining factor in the overall effects produced. Researchers disagree on the effects that media have on consumers. While some believe that interpersonal interactions filter media effects, others argue that media effects are enhanced by these interactions (Lasorsa & Wanta, 1990, p. 804). Slater (1999) noted that perceived social norms and expectations can be influenced by discussion of media coverage. Lasorsa et al. (1990) suggested that individuals who are exposed to news media determine the importance of a subject based upon media's coverage (p. 805). Lasorsa et al. also suggested that people will discuss media issues that affect their lives, and in doing so, will be more likely to adhere to the agenda of the news media (p. 812). Studies conducted to examine the influence of print media on a population conclude, in large part, that "print messages require more active processing on the part of receivers" (Pfau & King, 1993, p.183), and as a result, can be more influential. Also, it is likely that those who regularly use print media as a source of information can be characterized as heavy users of this type of medium, and studies have demonstrated that "heavy users of a specific medium are uniquely susceptible to influence via that medium" (Pfau & King, 1993, p.183). Given these potential effects of media, the article now moves to the methods employed in studying magazine portrayals of ADHD.

Methods

In this study, *Time, Newsweek*, and *U. S. News and World Report*, three prominent news magazines, were analyzed for a variety of characteristics related to portrayals of ADHD. A Lexis-Nexis search was performed to find all mentions of attention-deficit disorder (ADD), attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), and Ritalin (the most pertinent search terms) in each magazine. The earliest mention of these terms was as follows: *Time*, 1989; *Newsweek*, 1993; and *U. S. News and World Report*, 1988. All items (n=102) that focused on attention-deficit/hyperactivity-disorder were examined across a 14-year period, running from the earliest mention, in 1988, to the point at which the study was completed, in 2002.

Magazine items were analyzed according to the length of coverage in pages and the type of coverage (i.e. article, sidebar, letter). Specifically, an article had to be at least one page long, featuring pictures, a bold headline, and statements of fact. A sidebar was considered to be at least one paragraph, though no longer than one page, absent of pictures, with comparatively small headlines. Letters were considered to be those mentions found in the first few pages of the magazines, written by readers in response to previous articles or sidebars, and were no more than two paragraphs in length. Consideration was given to coverage type because texts that cover a greater number of pages and are featured as articles may attract more attention from readers than either sidebars or letters, and thus may have greater impact.

Next, coverage was evaluated based on several facets of content. First, values were assigned for mentions of ADD and ADHD, respectively, for varying reasons. It appears that in both professional and popular literature, what was once considered ADD has now come to include symptoms of hyperactivity, leading to a newer all-inclusive diagnosis of ADHD. In response to this trend, the authors thought it necessary to identify specifically which diagnostic label was used. Consideration was also given to whether another psychiatric disorder was mentioned. The importance of this variable is its ability to influence a parent who may suspect that his or her child has ADHD to seek diagnosis and treatment. If depression, bipolar disorder, or mania, for example, are mentioned alongside ADHD, parents may falsely believe that these disorders are related to ADHD and feel a greater urgency to have their child treated.

Another variable indicated whether a description of the symptoms of ADD/ADHD were provided in the text. The importance here is that if a parent, who had never considered a child to fit the criteria for an ADHD diagnosis, read symptoms of hyperactivity, inability to concentrate, and lack of ability to finish tasks, all commonly stated as primary symptoms of ADHD, the parent might be more eager to seek diagnosis and treatment.

Next, the types of treatment mentioned in the text were taken into consideration. Text was coded for mentions of both medicinal treatment and behavioral treatment. The authors divided the first variable, medicinal treatment, into four categories: (1) A mention of Ritalin, (2) mention of drugs other than Ritalin, (3) both Ritalin and other drugs, and (4) no mention of drug treatment. The variable assigned to behavioral treatment was less specific, only taking into consideration whether behavioral therapy through a psychiatrist, school counselor, or outside therapy group was mentioned.

The authors thought it was important as well to identify sources quoted directly or indirectly in the text. Three variables for this category were assigned. The first variable took into account whether the use of a doctor or an expert in the field of behavioral disorders was mentioned. This variable was important because of the belief that having a doctor or medical expert list symptoms of ADHD, for example, is more persuasive than simply listing the symptoms without attributing them to an expert source. A second variable was assigned to the presence of a parent or layperson as a source. One might argue that if parents reading the publication are exposed to the thoughts, feelings, and experiences of other parents in similar situations, they may be more likely to identify with the source, which could lend more persuasive effects leading to treatment. The final variable used in identifying sources was a non-specific other, most commonly a published author who had knowledge of the disorder, yet did not hold any professional credentials. This source could be influential in that parents, upon reading the source's remarks, might be more inclined to read literature authored by the source and could be influenced about the existence of ADHD.

Another variable indicated whether the text provided a specific case of a child diagnosed with ADHD. As with the previous variable of using a parent as a source, the authors reasoned that if a reader were exposed to a specific case of a child with ADHD, he or she might be more likely to identify commonalities between the child portrayed and his or her child, and thus be more inclined to seek diagnosis.

The presence of statistics within the text was another variable taken into consideration. If statistics were provided in an article, the opinion of the readers as to the perceived prevalence of ADHD, effective treatment, and the likelihood of a child having the disorder could be influenced. Another factor taken into consideration was whether the text stated that ADHD occurs more often in males. While the rates of diagnosis among males and females have become more equal in recent years, it is still more commonly diagnosed among elementary-school males. The most common symptoms are more prevalent in boys, which may be the reason males are diagnosed more frequently. Girls with this disorder have a tendency to withdraw socially, instead of acting out, which could possibly be misdiagnosed as depression instead of ADHD. The text was also surveyed for a mention of the present concern over misdiagnosis. The potential for misdiagnosis with this disorder is great because the criteria are so ambiguous, and children can display the disorder in various ways. If a reader who believes that his or her child has ADHD is exposed to this concern, the eagerness to receive diagnosis and treatment may be greatly influenced.

Finally, the text was examined for whether there was a statement concerning the adverse side effects of medications prescribed for ADHD. This variable was highly important in that many people are unaware that Ritalin, Adderall, and other methylphenidates may actually cause ADD-like symptoms to *worsen*. This factor is also important when determining if the text would influence parents to seek treatment for their child. The last factor considered was the presence of the words 'Ritalin' or 'hyperactivity' in the text's headline. The presence of these words conceivably could cause readers who would otherwise pass over an article to stop and take note.

After coding all texts that mentioned ADD, ADHD, or Ritalin in *Time, Newsweek, and U. S. News and World Report,* a comparison was made between the publications as to the amount of coverage given to the subject of ADHD, the years in which coverage dramatically increased or decreased, and the characteristics of specific content found in each publication.

Results

Since 1988, *Time, Newsweek, and U. S. News and World Report* have published a substantial number of articles, sidebars, and letters (n=102). Interestingly, *U. S. News and World Report* published twice as many total items as *Time* and *Newsweek* combined. Of the 102 pieces of text studied, *U. S. News and World Report* was responsible for 52 pieces of text (51%), while *Time* published 26 (25.5%), and *Newsweek* published 23 (22.5%). Articles accounted for a majority of the texts, at 64.7%, with sidebars accounting for 29.4% of observed items, along with five letters. Seventy-one percent of publications were no more than two pages long (44.1% one page and 27.5% two pages), while eight articles were three pages long (7.8%), seven articles were four to five pages in length (6.9%), and fourteen articles were longer than five pages (13.8%), with the two longest articles covering nine pages of text.

Figure 1 summarizes the frequency of publications in all three magazines for the years 1988 through 2002. Of particular note in this figure is the rise in editorial coverage of ADHD, from the point at which coverage began (1988) to the point at which the content analysis concluded (2002).

Figure 1

About Here

Of the 102 articles coded for this study, 50 (49%) of those mentioned ADD and 45 (44.1%) mentioned ADHD. The remaining seven articles that mentioned neither ADD nor ADHD focused more on medicinal treatment such as Ritalin, its uses and its side effects, instead of the actual disorder. Slightly more than half of the articles examined (51.0%) mentioned a psychological disorder other than ADD or ADHD. Surprisingly, only 39 articles (38.2%) described the symptoms commonly associated with ADHD. Yet, of those that did describe symptoms, 33.3% (n=13) also stated that ADHD was more common in boys. Only four of the articles (6.3%) did not provide a summary of symptoms, yet still stated that ADHD occurred more often in males. Fifty-nine of the articles (93.7%) provided neither symptoms of ADHD, nor stated that it had higher diagnostic rates in males.

There were important findings within the texts in reference to the treatment methods assessed. Only thirty articles (29.4%) out of the 102 analyzed did not refer to some sort of medicinal treatment. Forty articles (39.2%) stated only Ritalin as a treatment method, while eight (7.8%) referred to other drugs. However, 24 articles (23.5%) cited both Ritalin and other drugs as possible treatment methods. A significant finding in the survey of material is that out of the 26 articles appearing in *Time* magazine that mentioned medicinal treatment, twenty-one (80.8%) mentioned Ritalin specifically.

Seventy-one pieces of text (69.6%), a large majority, gave no mention of behavioral treatment as a way to treat ADHD. Yet, the remaining 30.4% (n=31) did mention some form of behavioral therapy through psychiatric counseling, a school counselor, or group therapy.

The rates at which articles in some way referenced a source in the text showed surprising equivalence. Fifty-four pieces of text (52.9%) either directly or indirectly used a medical doctor or an expert in this field as a source of information, leaving 48 pieces of text (47.1%) with no mention of this type of source. With regard to using a parent or layperson as a source of information or example, 50 pieces of text (49.0%) attributed some information to these people, while 52 (51.0%) did not. Other non-specific sources of information, usually authors who did not hold professional credentials, were cited most often with rates of occurrence in 58 pieces of text (56.9%), leaving 44 pieces of text (43.1%) with no mention of these types of sources.

Interestingly, the rates at which the varying texts used specific cases as examples was perfectly divided. Fifty-one articles, sidebars, or letters provided an actual portrayal of a child diagnosed with ADHD, while the remaining half did not. The rates at which statistics were provided in each text were not as equal. Fifty-eight pieces of text (56.9%) gave no statistics. Similarly, a large portion (n=68; 66.7%) did not mention the potential for misdiagnosis anywhere in the text. Only 34 pieces of text (33.3%) addressed the possibility that children could be misdiagnosed or that ADHD is possibly being over diagnosed or misdiagnosed among American youth. Finally, the rates in which the words 'Ritalin' or 'hyperactivity' appeared in the headlines were surprisingly small. The word Ritalin only appeared in 12 headlines (11.8%), and hyperactivity appeared nine times (8.8%). The two words did appear together in two headlines (2.0%), and the remaining 79 headlines (77.5%) contained neither word.

Discussion

The findings from this research are important with regard to media portrayals of child psychological disorders. The authors correctly assumed that media coverage of ADHD would increase dramatically throughout the 1990s. While it is difficult to determine exactly how media coverage of ADHD correlates with the diagnosis of the disorder in American youth, there is little doubt that the two factors are related. Before media attention was given to the disorder, the general population may not have been aware of the symptoms and treatments available. As a result, children who fit the diagnostic criteria for ADHD potentially could have gone untreated. Yet, as media coverage increased and the public was made more aware of the disorder, parents and teachers would have been better educated and more willing to seek a diagnosis. This is where the agenda setting and agenda building theories of mass media become important. As indicated earlier, media not only tell people what to think about with regard to unobtrusive issues, but also frame those issues in a certain manner. With respect to ADHD, many frames are conceivable, cutting across symptoms, treatment methods, and the gender of those affected. So, while it is difficult to say how directly the media have contributed to the increased diagnosis of ADHD, it is possible to conclude that media have played a role.

The findings from this research reveal that while ADD and ADHD were mentioned in all but seven articles, the symptoms of the disorder were provided in slightly more than one-third of the texts. In addition, of the articles that did provide common symptoms, only four articles did not also state that the disorder occurred more commonly in males, while none stated that the disorder was also prevalent in young females. The implications of this finding are great. It appears that males are much more likely to receive a diagnosis of ADHD, and media may play a role. The symptoms provided in all of the publications were those most commonly found in males. As a result, if parents and teachers use the information provided in these publications to evaluate a child and determine his or her need for medical treatment, ADHD may remain undiagnosed in a large portion of the female population. This finding suggests that media's role in helping to raise awareness of social concerns, in this case ADHD, may in fact be detrimental. Males, of course, will be diagnosed more when the common symptoms provided to educate parents and teachers are those most commonly found in males.

The findings regarding the coverage or mention of other psychiatric disorders in addition to ADHD were non-significant. It was determined that other disorders were mentioned in almost exactly half of the texts surveyed, and so no inference can be made as to the potential of this variable to persuade parents to seek treatment for attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder.

The data found concerning the suggested treatment for ADHD are important when one considers the impact the media can have on influencing a population's attitudes about medical treatment. In almost 71 percent of the texts examined, some type of medicinal treatment was suggested as a way to correct the symptoms most commonly associated with the disorder. Of those texts, 62.7 percent mentioned Ritalin. While the controversy surrounding the use of Ritalin cannot be summarized within the contexts of this study, it is important to note that concern does exist over the uses and misuses of this particular drug. As stated in the preceding review of literature, the use of Ritalin in the United States has increased dramatically, and it is possible that media coverage of Ritalin has contributed to this increase. The potential use of other prescribed drugs to treat this disorder was also suggested in a portion of the articles, although not nearly as often as Ritalin was suggested. The implications of this finding suggest that when a layperson is exposed to the information provided in these publications, a potential exists for that person to seek treatment based on the symptoms listed and the medicinal treatment suggested. As a result, a parent who reads an article in one of these texts may become convinced that his or her child fits the criteria for diagnosis of ADHD and should receive the most readily available prescription to control the symptoms. So, when media continuously suggest that Ritalin or similar drugs are the most accessible way to treat this disorder, a larger portion of parents may insist that their child receive such treatment.

Relatively few pieces of text, less than one-third, suggested behavioral therapy as a means to mitigate the symptoms of ADHD. While in some instances it is necessary to treat a person's symptoms with prescriptions, employing behavioral therapy offers a non-intrusive method of treatment that teaches children how to regulate their behavior. Yet, this type of treatment obviously requires more effort from parents, teachers, and medical professionals. One can advance the normative argument that media have a responsibility to fully cover all treatment options when reporting about a medical condition. Yet, from the data collected in this study, it appears that media have not done so.

Time, Newsweek, and *U. S. News and World Report* have provided extensive amounts of coverage to suggested methods of treatment of ADHD, yet a large majority of the texts failed to mention the potential negative side effects of the prescription drugs used to treat this disorder, as well as a concern that exists among medical professionals that the disorder may be misdiagnosed. In all three media sources examined during the course of this study, the adverse side effects of prescribed medication were mentioned in less than one-third of the texts for each source. This finding is important because it appears that while a majority of the media, based on this study, suggested Ritalin or other such stimulants as a method for treatment, little consideration or print coverage was given to the potentially dangerous side effects these medications can produce. The texts in which the side effects were mentioned covered real-life stories in which parents discontinued administering the medication to their children because the symptoms of the disorder were exacerbated or the child displayed potentially harmful behaviors to him- or herself and others. The side effects potentially produced from methylphenidates are harmful, and it is a necessary responsibility of the media to report the effects of a medication when suggesting that medication as a form of treatment.

Another controversy surrounding ADHD is the idea that it is currently being misdiagnosed or over diagnosed. The results form this study found that while *Time*, *Newsweek*, and *U.S. News and World Report* reported the possibility of misdiagnosis at approximately the same rate, that rate was quite low. Overall, the issue of misdiagnosis was mentioned in only one-third of the texts, greatly disproportional to the coverage that suggested medicinal treatments received. Interestingly, it should be pointed out that as previously mentioned, *Time* magazine suggested medicinal treatment, specifically Ritalin, in all but five of their published texts pertaining to this subject. So, it seems that while these publications are eager to propose treatment for ADHD, they do not give equal amounts of coverage to the concern among some medical professionals that too many children are being given this medication unnecessarily.

An important finding of this study also pertained to the mentions of sources within texts. While each source considered—medical professionals, parents and lay persons, and others—were reported with approximately the same frequency (one-half), the specific sources used appeared to vary between publications. Most notably, it was found that *U. S. News and World Report* and *Newsweek* cited parents or laypersons as sources in more than one-half of the texts pertaining to this topic. In contrast, *Time* cited parents or laypersons in slightly more than one-fourth of their publications. The suggestion of this finding is that *Time* uses more professional references or no references at all in their texts. In examining how this use of sources may influence *Time*'s credibility, it appears that even though laypersons may not be able to identify with the sources in the text, the information provided will most likely be more influential because it is attributed to professionals or experts in a particular field.

With regard to future research, it might be interesting to examine a larger variety of print sources, including newspapers, and also television media. Also, survey research could be conducted among physicians, parents, and teachers to determine influential factors that may cause an individual to seek diagnosis and treatment. While this study examined how magazine coverage of ADHD varied among publications and years, it would be interesting to conduct a content analysis on other types of media and cross-analyze that data with survey research. There is no doubt that media influence attitudes toward health issues; however, the specific magnitude of effects can only be determined through research that includes a survey component.

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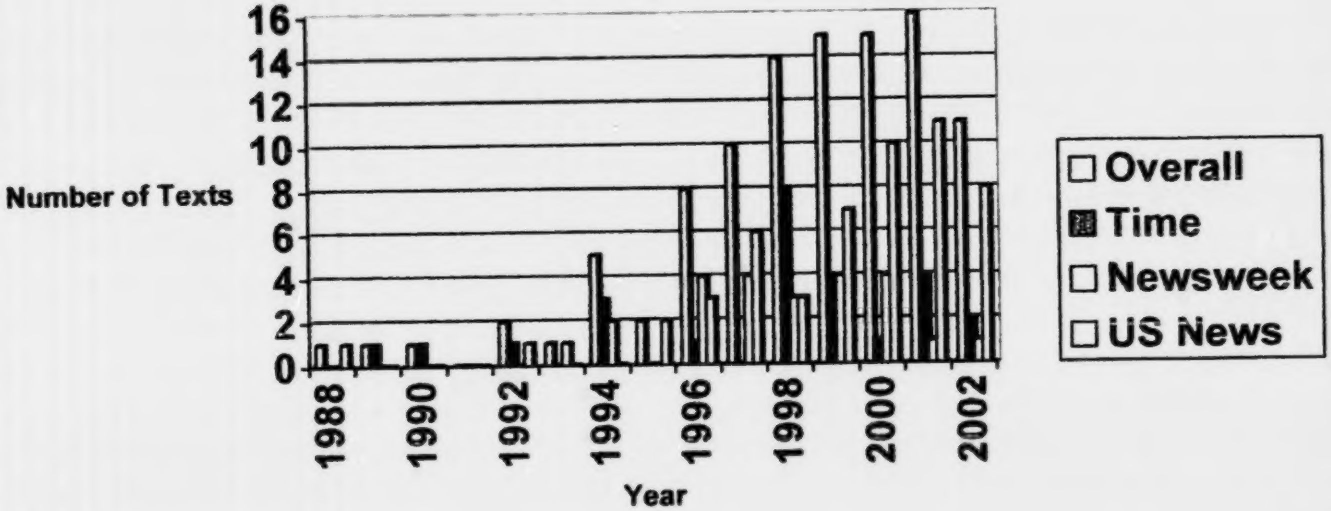
Figure 1 Text Frequencies



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Promoting Disability-Friendly Campuses to Prospective Students: An Analysis of University Recruitment Materials

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PROMOTING DISABILITY-FRIENDLY CAMPUSES TO PROSPECTIVE STUDENTS: AN ANALYSIS OF UNIVERSITY RECRUITMENT MATERIALS

Estimates are that currently about 9 percent of students on college campuses have some form of disability, up from 3 percent in 1978 (Heath Resource Center, 1998; Hebel, 2001, July 6). About half of these students are using services provided on those campuses by disabled student services (DSS) offices (Muir, 2003). These students have a variety of disabilities, ranging from mobility impairments to visual or hearing impairments to learning difficulties, and all are supposed to receive accommodations on those college campuses based on Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act. How do these students receive information about these accommodations, their rights, the campus accessibility, and other issues related to them? That is the focus of this study.

The intent is to understand how public colleges and universities are dealing with disability in their promotional materials to future students. Basic public relations practices explain that an organization should know its audiences and focus its message accordingly. University admission offices obviously know that college-bound high school students are their primary audience. Do they also know that a significant percentage of this audience may have a disability and will need information about specific disability services on campuses? Therefore, this study investigates what universities are and are not providing in their general recruitment materials about disability-related topics, as well as what campus disability services materials are providing. The analysis of these materials will illuminate how universities are approaching current recruitment issues related to students with disabilities.

Based on information requested from 99 U.S. universities, the following research questions were investigated: Do their viewbooks and other materials sent to interested high school students depict disability? If someone requests information about the universities' services for students with disabilities, what will he or she receive? What do materials from disabled student services look like? What information do they cover?

Students with disabilities and college access

Formalized disability services for college students began at the University of Illinois in 1948 when Tim Nugent founded the Division of Rehabilitation Education Services (Ross, 1998). The intent was to serve returned World War II veterans who had acquired disabilities, and the university's services grew from there. The university's services are now comprehensive, ranging from an independent living center on campus to a top wheelchair sports program. The University of Illinois even has a study abroad program for students with disabilities. In 1998 the disability magazine, *New Mobility,* named the university the No. 1 disability-friendly campus in America.

Another pioneer in serving students with disabilities is the University of California at Berkeley. The founder of the independent living movement, Ed Roberts, a polio survivor in an iron lung, helped establish a program for disabled students there in 1962. His efforts inspired others and soon about dozen severely disabled people enrolled. The group, known as the rolling quads, began to knock down the barriers on campus by putting in wheelchair ramps, starting a wheelchair repair service, and employing attendants for their personal needs (Shapiro, 1995). Berkeley's program continues that spirit by focusing not only on accommodation but on educating students on their independent living rights and on how to train their own personal attendants. Berkeley's program is "designed for freshmen and transfer students who have not previously directed their own personal care. This two-semester training period turns out confident students primed to live independently," it reports (Ross, 1998). After that first year, students with disabilities live independently, either on or off campus.

However, these early university programs for disabled students were the exceptions rather than the rule until the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 was passed, Section 504 of which requires any programs or activities that receive federal monies must reasonably accommodate individuals with disabilities and not discriminate against them. This law continues to cover any university or college because almost all, either public and private, receive some kind of federal assistance. This means that universities and colleges cannot limit the admission of qualified students with disabilities, must provide reasonable accommodations, and should allow students with disabilities to participate fully in any required activities. The U.S. Office of Civil Rights enforces Section 504 in educational settings.

Even with Section 504 in place, many colleges and universities did little to become more accessible. However, with the advent of the more publicized 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), colleges and universities began to increase their accessibility. Thomas (2000) reports that the broader reach of the ADA and more accommodation requests from disabled students propelled more schools into compliance. More students became aware of their rights in the years after Section 504 and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, which began as the Education for all Handicapped Children Act in 1975. It mandated free and public education for all children with disabilities. By 1990 many of these children were readying for college and began to request accommodations for their college experience as well. Students with learning disabilities especially began applying to college. In 1996, 35 percent of the freshmen college students with disabilities had learning disabilities; this shows a 10 percent increase of freshmen with learning

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disabilities since 1991 (Heath Resource Center, 1998). Better testing, diagnosis, and awareness of learning disabilities probably accounts for this sharp rise.

Under Title II of the ADA, any public entity, such as public colleges, cannot deny qualified people with disabilities the right to participate in its programs or activities, and these public entities cannot exclude or discriminate based on disability. Under Title III of the ADA, places of public accommodation, which covers any private college, cannot deny people with disabilities full and equal access to any services, facilities, or programs that they provide. Since 1990 the courts have been redefining the meaning of the ADA, with the definition of "qualified" coming into question. However, the stated ADA definition of a qualified person with a disability is someone who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, has a record of such an impairment, or is regarded as having such an impairment. The goal is for the definition to cover both people who are unable to do certain things such as walk, as well as those who might discriminated against because of the stigma associated with their disability such as being HIV positive. "With respect to postsecondary education, a qualified student with a disability is one who is able to meet a program's admission, academic, and technical standards (i.e. all essential nonacademic admissions criteria) either with or without accommodation" (Thomas, 2000, p. 249).

College admissions procedures may not discriminate against students with disabilities in the admissions process; however, students must meet legitimate admissions requirements. But Thomas (2000) reports that college "officials will need to provide an individualized assessment of the qualifications of students with disabilities to ensure that traditional criteria have not arbitrarily screened out otherwise qualified applicants. Also, being qualified may at times require the college to provide the applicant/student with appropriate and reasonable accommodations" (p. 254). A number of court cases and the U.S. Office of Civil Rights have supported the idea that if a student is disabled and qualified, colleges should try to find alternative accommodations that allow the student to participate in its programs (Thomas, 2000). "Once a student has sufficiently documented that he or she has a qualifying disability, a college is responsible for providing reasonable accommodations or modifications that do not result in unfair advantage, require significant alteration to the program or activity, result in the lowering of academic or technical standards, or cause the college undue financial hardship" (Thomas, 2000, p. 255).

Most accommodations for qualified students with disabilities are reasonable and are provided with little fanfare or controversy by colleges, Thomas says. In fact, disability rights attorneys say universities provide better access to students with disabilities than do K-12 schools (Kennedy, 2000). Parking issues on college campuses, which cause problems for nondisabled students, too, are often cited as problematic for students with disabilities because there may not be enough accessible spaces or they may not be close enough to buildings. Also, when construction projects take place on college campuses, students with mobility impairments may find it difficult to find an accessible route around campus. However, disability rights advocates say it is schools' misunderstanding of the ADA and what it means for them that cause even more problems than inaccessible buildings. Rhonda Benedetti, an attorney for Disability Rights Advocates, says, "The attitudinal barriers are many times worse than the architectural barriers. They might put a ramp to the stage of the theater, but their policy doesn't allow students with disabilities to audition for the play" (Kennedy, 2000, p. 17).

In addition, at the college level some faculty may not understand the law and balk at providing necessary accommodations for students with disabilities. According learning disability researchers Nelson, Dodd, & Smith (1990), some faculty are concerned that accommodating students with learning disabilities may lessen academic standards, but they were open to receiving information about new methods of accommodation that would help them maintain academic standards. However, generally, faculty showed willingness to provide proper accommodations to students with learning disabilities in college (Nelson, Dodd, & Smith, 1990). Another study, this one of students with disabilities at Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU), reported that faculty behavior is the most important factor in their college success (Wilson, Getzel, & Brown, 2000). "In numerous ways, students expressed that without full cooperation and support of the classroom faculty, they had little chance of succeeding academically" (p. 41). Students also explained that colleges focused too much on architectural barriers and gave less consideration to programmatic or instructional barriers. The students at VCU also were concerned about lack of DSS staff and services and the unique services that were needed as students matriculated. In addition, students worried about faculty knowledge of disability accommodations. "Students were generally dissatisfied with the degree to which faculty and administrators were knowledgeable and aware of their disability specific needs and the level of cooperation received during implementation of prescribed modifications and accommodations" disabilities (Wilson, Getzel, & Brown, 2000, p. 46).

A major problem colleges face in accommodating students with disabilities is cost. A number of college students with disabilities are also clients of state rehabilitation agencies. These agencies pay for college tuition and some personal expenses of clients who are attending college to increase their ability to work. Colleges are supposed to provide academic-specific accommodations for students with disabilities such as classroom access. However, a conflict between colleges and state rehabilitation agencies has arisen over who should pay for personal accommodations needed to meet career and academic goals (Hebel, 2001, July 6). These are accommodations such as sign language interpreters, which can cost $20,000 annually per student. Many states agree that state rehabilitation agencies and colleges should share costs but at what percentage is under contention. Even disability organizations disagree on who should pay for these accommodations. The National Association of the Deaf says colleges should pay for interpreters because that way state rehabilitation agencies will have more resources for all state residents and won't be favoring those who go to college. In contrast, the Association on Higher Education and Disability (AHEAD) says state rehabilitation agencies should pay for the accommodations because "society as a whole benefits from the education of persons with disabilities;" therefore, the resources should be paid for by taxpayers not the tuition of college students (Hebel, 2001, July 6, p. 45).

However, not all accommodations at colleges are costly. Stodden, et al. (2001) investigated what kind of supports are being provided to college students. They found that testing accommodations, notetakers, personal counseling, and advocacy assistance were the most frequents supports offered. Many of these are less costly accommodations; for example, at one state college on the East Coast, the DSS office pays a classmate of the disabled student $100 for the semester to photocopy his or her notes weekly. Stodden et al. found a larger problem affecting college students with disabilities – although there are many more of them in colleges, they are not moving through college programs at the same speed as other students, and thus are paying for more years of college than others. Stodden and Dowrick (2000) explain a college education is crucial for qualified people with disabilities because their employment options are much less without an education. People with disabilities face much higher unemployment and poverty levels than the rest of society, and Stodden (1998) found that poverty levels for college-educated people with disabilities is 15 percent, compared to 50 percent for people with disabilities

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who dropped out of high school. However, people with disabilities have much more difficulty gaining access to higher education than do nondisabled people, according to the National Organization on Disability (1998). This lack of access to higher education may affect society as a whole because people with disabilities are often referred to as "America's largest untapped talent pool" (Green & Brooke, 2001). Many businesses are faced with labor shortages and employing educated people with disabilities can fill that need.

Colleges, however, continue to face tough financial issues in meeting the needs of growing numbers of students with disabilities. Many times, resources have not grown in proportion to the increased number of students with disabilities entering colleges. Thomas (2000) says that college disabled student services (DSS) offices are "often inadequately funded, given the growth in the number of students requesting accommodation, and seldom have experts on staff who are knowledgeable about a wide range of disabilities that colleges are now attempting to accommodate" (p. 248). As mentioned, the number of freshman college students with disabilities has increased from 3 percent in 1978 to 9 percent in 1998 (Hebel, 2001, July 6). All these issues – increasing numbers of disabled students, financial resources of DSS offices, attitudinal barriers, and an understanding of disability rights laws – influence current university practices, and thus this study investigates how these issues are born out in recruitment and DSS materials.

Methodology

The study was designed around a simple request for information by the researcher to two large public universities in each state in the United States. Public universities were chosen because they are usually less restrictive in admissions, and also as government-funded entities, they should be more aware of their requirements under the Americans with Disabilities Act. All letters were sent to admissions offices at the colleges so as to receive information that would be sent in reply to an inquiry. The letters all contained the following paragraph: "Please send me information about your undergraduate programs for the 2003-2004 school year. I would also be interested in receiving information concerning your provisions for students with disabilities."

The letters, which asked for the information to be sent to the researcher's home address, were sent to 99 colleges (Wyoming only has one state university). The addresses were obtained from a guidebook to all U.S. colleges and universities. Only one letter had an incorrect address, which was corrected and sent back. Most of the materials arrived quickly and the analysis began about six weeks after the letter was sent.

As a first step, a simple code sheet was developed to assess the general university materials. The intent was to provide a snapshot of what university recruitment materials look like generally. Because modern public relations practitioners acknowledge that diversity is the most important aspect of the U.S. audience (Wilcox, et al, 2003), the code sheet also looked at ethnic imagery to investigate the diversity in the pictures used in the materials and whether students with disabilities were included. Finally, the code sheet looked for any mentions of services for students with disabilities and EEOC/non-discrimination statements. Using SPSS, the data from the code sheet was analyzed. Although the number of materials was small (N=85), the data provide a picture of what is depicted in the university materials' images and how often disability is mentioned or shown.

However, the bulk of analysis was qualitative, focusing on describing the general university materials that did depict or mention disability (N=17) and on disabled student services materials (N=30).

Findings

The first and most surprising finding was that 14 colleges sent no information at all when requested. Some of those missing were quite prominent schools, such as the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill and the University of Missouri-Columbia. No letters from these schools were returned, which would indicate the addresses were incorrect. The only speculation this researcher has about those 14 schools is that they may expect interested students to get information about their colleges on the web or that their admissions are so restrictive that they don't send out materials unless students are already admitted. However, relying on the web solely can be problematic because many university web sites that use frames or graphics may not compatible with screen readers that some people may use due to a visual impairment or learning disability (Carnevale, 1999, October 29). For example, one study found that 77 percent of community college web sites (N=195) did not meet content accessibility standards (Flowers, Bray, & Algozzine, 2001). Also, most parents and high school students probably prefer printed materials that they can review and compare at their leisure.

Out of the 85 schools that sent information, almost half sent a cover letter; however, not one of the cover letters mentioned disability services. All the letters were obviously form letters. In addition, another eight schools sent an application only and no information about their schools, so the analysis of the materials was done on the remaining 77 schools' materials. These materials were primarily 8x11-inch four-color viewbooks (71 percent), with 14 percent in the folded 3.5x8-inch style and 13 percent in the form of CD-ROMs.

Photos in general university materials

All the photographs of students in these materials were coded to assess race/ethnicity and disability. Table 1 lists those findings. It was unexpected to find so many materials with images of disabled students (22 percent), especially when only about one-third of the schools sent any disability services information. A crosstabulation revealed that of those 17 universities that included pictures of disabled students, 12 mentioned disability services in their general materials. That finding would be expected – that when the university had disability awareness to include disabled students in pictures, they would remember to include information about services. The high racial diversity in the general university materials images was expected. In fact, after several recent controversies in which universities such as the University of Wisconsin-Madison, University of Idaho, and Auburn University doctored their materials to add diversity (Hohman, 2000; Lee, 2000), it was suspected that even states with little racial diversity would include a higher proportion of diversity. A number of materials featured a type of "rainbow" picture on their cover, which included one white, one black, one Asian, and one Latino or bi-racial person. The reason racial diversity was assessed was to contrast it to disability, which is the largest "minority" group in the United States with more than 50 million people reporting a legally defined disability (U.S. Census, 2002). Some university materials illustrated racial diversity in a much higher proportion than what it is in some states; whereas, disability images typically are presented in less proportion to their incidence in the general population.

The images of disabled students were equally as ethnically diverse. Eight pictures show white disabled people; seven, African Americans; and two, Asians. However, the images were diverse in terms of disability type: 15 of the 17 images were of wheelchair users; two pictured used crutches. This contrasts sharply with research about news photographs of people with disabilities (N=171), which found 80 percent of photos depicted white people, 10.5 percent black, .6 percent Asian, and 2.3 percent Hispanic (Haller, 2000, 1995). Obviously, news photographers do not have control over the race of their subjects like a university PR photographer does. This finding is probably a sign of the diversity awareness university PR professionals have when promoting their campus.

In addition, the analysis of the 17 disability images shows that those colleges that pictured students with disabilities usually created appropriate and non-stigmatizing images. Using Knoll's qualitative schema on photographic images of people with disabilities, the 17 images were analyzed. Knoll (1987) established a systematic way to look at thematic content in images of people with disabilities. He developed a four-tiered qualitative approach for photographs that investigates the artist, image, viewer, and society. In this way, he explored historical and artistic influences, techniques in the content and visual relationships, explicit and implicit meanings, and patterns of meaning.

Using Knoll's interpretive categories, this analysis found that the majority of the photographs (13 of 17) fell into the "one of the gang" category. This category shows the person with a disability "being accepted as a member of a group of friends or acquaintances" (Knoll, 1987, p. 436). These 13 images showed the student with a disability interacting with or grouped with other students. As public relations materials, many of the photographs obviously were staged, but it is still significant that the public relations person or photographer decided not to show the disabled student as alone, which would fit with Knoll's category of the person being shown as "alienated or isolated from the world of normal human interaction" (p. 434). However, the two pictures in which the disabled students are alone still do not leave the impression of alienation or isolation. For example, the University of Illinois viewbook features a 10 ½x4-inch picture on page 1 that gives a panoramic view of the campus, with students on the sidewalks, one of whom happens to be a wheelchair user. Although alone, the young man in the wheelchair still appears to be part of the campus community because he is just one of the several dozen people on campus. The other picture in which a disabled student is shown alone is in the Middle Tennessee State University viewbook. An African-American woman using a three-wheel scooter is in a 2x3-inch picture on page 15. Although alone, it is obvious she is on campus because of the red-brick building and landscaped lawn behind her, so there is an underlying message that she is part of the campus community.

Two other photos in the university materials seem to depict disabled people receiving help from a nondisabled person, which could subtly fit with Knoll's category of a disabled person being depicted as "helpless." But in the Georgia State University viewbook it is unclear whether the disabled person is even part of the campus community or has just come onto campus to be helped by someone in the College of Health and Human Sciences, which is being promoted with the picture. The 4x3-inch picture depicts a young woman holding the back of another woman's wheelchair as she leans back toward the floor. They are on a floor mat that would be used for athletics in a gymnasium. The overall impression from the picture is that the nondisabled woman is training or assisting the woman in the wheelchair. The other image of "helping" in the Hunter College viewbook is more ambiguous, which makes it less stigmatizing. It shows an Asian woman in a wheelchair writing on a piece of paper in front of a young man, who is also holding the paper. They are in a computer lab; however, it is unclear who is helping whom.

The rest of the images showed the person with a disability with other people, either staged or candid. One of the best candid shots was in the brochure of the University of California-Berkeley, which is one of the most disability-aware campuses in America. An African American man, who uses a power wheelchair, and an Asian woman are looking intently at a notebook or book. It is unclear but the young man may be reading Braille. In the background are an Asian man and a Hispanic man who are taking no notice of their activity. The impression it leaves is of a natural and equal interaction between the man and woman. Three other images that appeared to be candid shots were of an African American woman wheelchair user cheering with the crowd at a football game in the Mississippi State University brochure, a white woman wheelchair user dressed in cap and gown at graduation in Michigan State's viewbook, and a white male wheelchair user at some kind of street festival in the University of Arizona brochure.

Although 10 of the images appear to be staged, several seem to contain Knoll's category of "This is Me!", which depicts the disabled person as self-assured and assertive. When the person with a disability looks directly at the camera with a self-confident smile, "this is me" comes across loud and clear. For example, in the Temple University viewbook an African American man with crutches smiles broadly as he stands with a white man and white woman in a large cut-out picture. The picture leaves an impression that he feels confident and equal to his peers. In the University of North Dakota-Grand Forks viewbook, a white male wheelchair user indicates his assertiveness through his hand movements and body language, and the white nondisabled woman in the picture is sitting at his feet, instead of standing over him.

As mentioned, there was little diversity in terms of disability with 88 percent of the 17 university materials depicting wheelchair users. This is not an unusual finding because modern disability representations are associated with equipment that can provide the viewer of the photograph with an unstated and easily interpreted visual cue. Knoll (1987) calls these "disability symbols" in photographs and they include such things as wheelchairs, canes, or other symbols of impaired mobility. These allow the person to be labeled as disabled without it being stated. In comparison to news photographs of people with disabilities, the prevalent use of wheelchair users is a typical finding. Haller (2000, 1995) found that wheelchair use was the representation of disability most often used in the print photos at 54 percent (N=171). Other disabilities depicted were not near that percentage. Hearing impairment (9.9%), visual impairment (8.8%), and cerebral palsy (7%) were the next three most prevalent representations. However, these images do misrepresent the reality of disability statistics, in which only about 2.2 million people with disabilities use wheelchairs, which is about four percent of the 50 million people with disabilities (U.S. Census, 2002). In fact, disabilities such as arthritis (127 million), hearing impairments (83 million), and visual impairments (31 million) are much more prevalent (Centers for Disease Control, 1996).

Finally, all but one of the images presented the disabled students as "normal" in appearance, meaning there was no body distortion visible that might have indicated "enfreakment," a concept identified by British disability studies scholar David Hevey (1992). He argues that this is what many photographers do -- turn people with disabilities into freaks. Through his own photography, he tries to show the alternative to enfreakment. He photographically documents disability activism in Great Britain, which provides some positive images of disability. The image in the university materials that indicate some body distortion was in one of the candid shots, the African American woman wheelchair user cheering with the crowd at a football in the Mississippi State University brochure. She appears to have cerebral palsy or paralysis so her hands are flung halfway into the air as if she can't reach them above her head. The setting of the photo is what indicates she might have "different" arms and hands than the others because she is cheering about the football game and everyone around her is cheering with arms above their heads. However, the sports camaraderie depicted in the picture mediates the image, and she appears to be a fan just like everyone else in the crowd.

Disabled student services (DSS) materials

A separate analysis was conducted on the 30 DSS materials received. The first most obvious difference between DSS materials and general university materials is their poorer quality and smaller size. Table 2 illustrates what DSS offices send out, which are predominantly 3 ½x8-inch brochures (63%) that have spot color and few photos. Some of the brochures appear to be printed at the DSS office on regular paper and folded into brochures. For example, the University of Minnesota has a folded brochure on yellow paper that discusses access issues for disabled students and a folded brochure on off-white paper that discusses general disability services. The brochures have much pertinent information within them; however, their low-tech creation stands in stark contrast to the 18-page, four-color, glossy 8x11 viewbook sent out by the Minnesota admissions office.

Some of the DSS 3 ½x8-inch brochures, however, had a more professional and graphically appealing appearance. Ohio State University's Office for Disability Services has a 10-page, 3 ½x8-inch brochure with five black and white photos. Within the space, the brochure goes into depth about services for specific disabilities, discusses missions and values, eligibility for services, and its Adaptive Technology Training Center. The brochure is on card stock paper and has blue spot color and it has been prepared to be a mailer as well. The brochure illustrates that informational materials need not be four-color and glossy to look professional and provide helpful information.

Two of the most high quality DSS brochures came from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and the University of Missouri-St. Louis, respectively. Nebraska-Lincoln was the only DSS brochure that was four-color. Called "Your Guide to Access," it pictured four students on its cover, interestingly none of who is a wheelchair user. Of the three males and one female, one had a cane and one has a guide dog; the other two students' disabilities are unclear. Inside the 4x8-inch, six-page brochure, there are three more color pictures, of a student in cap and gown with her guide dog, of two students in a classroom with a sign language interpreter, and of a wheelchair user using a weight machine in a gym. The content of the brochure discusses a variety of issues from accessible parking to personal care attendants. It also has a useful address and phone directory of all the university's disability related services on its back page. The Missouri-St. Louis brochure has no photos and is text-based but provides 10 pages of information, including a flow chart on the last page that shows the steps for a disability assessment. It discusses access and campus policies, as well as providing phone numbers of all departments that would have relevance for a disabled student.

Although the glossy viewbook style brochures were missing, two colleges made up for that with a personal touch. For example, the student development coordinator at Johnson State College in Vermont sent his business card and a personal letter that discussed disability services and accommodations available on campus. Also, the disability resource director at the University of Kentucky sent a personal memo extending an invitation to contact him with any specific disability related questions. Unfortunately, that university only sent general university materials and sent no brochure from its Disability Resource Center.

In terms of content, most of the DSS materials covered the wide variety of disabilities and topics related to them well. Table 3 illustrates kinds of information in the DSS materials. The most prevalent topics are general office information (97%), classroom accommodations, learning disabilities (70%) and assistive technology (67%). The least prevalent topic was personal attendant services (7%), which are services that would only be required by a severely disabled student. Most of the information was written with a legal tone so that the students know their rights.

However, a few materials seemed to have a slight undertone of skepticism about disabilities, especially learning disabilities. For example, Virginia Tech's two-page information sheet spent much of one page discussing eligibility and documentation. Words such as "**acceptable professional** documentation", "**documentation must specify a disability**", and "**should** include measures of aptitude" were boldfaced. The implication seemed to be that the school was suspicious of documentation of disabilities and it wanted to reiterate that only qualified students with disabilities receive services. A similar undertone is expressed in the Illinois State "Disability Concerns" brochure, which focuses almost exclusively on documentation requirements. Ironically, an opposite problem typically exists: Some students with diagnosed learning disabilities try to attempt college classes without asking for accommodations. They may fear the stigma, discrimination, or low expectations that sometimes come with their disability. Learning disability legal expert Matt Cohen says: "The label becomes a scarlet letter branded on the person's identity, shaping people's assumptions and provoking their prejudices. The labels shape people's assumptions about a person's intellectual ability, about their personality, about their aspirations. In the school environment, the child's label may have a significant impact on the teachers' expectations for that child" (2002, Jan. 3). So in fact, university DSS offices should be encouraging more learning-disabled students to use their services, rather than presenting a subtext that learning-disabled students are "faking."

The overall focus of all the DSS materials was as information for students already enrolled at the universities. In addition, the fact that far less than half of universities even sent DSS information indicates that they may believe their focus to be current students, not prospective students. However, based on the findings of this study, universities may need to rethink that approach because they are not acknowledging or actively recruiting many qualified high school students with disabilities.

Discussion and Recommendations

Based on the research questions, this study shows that university viewbooks and other materials sent to interested high school students are depicting disability, which is a positive finding. However, there does not appear to be much recruitment of prospective students with disabilities past the occasional picture in the viewbook. No cover letter made a mention of unique services for students with disabilities, and less than half of the university general materials mentioned campus disability services (40%). In addition, only 39 percent of the schools that sent any general materials sent disabilities services materials (N=85). There appears to be a disconnection between the admissions offices and the DSS offices in which information doesn't flow to the DSS offices about students with disabilities interested in the university. Also, DSS materials indicate that those offices see their mission as serving those students with disabilities already on campus, rather than reaching out to prospective students. Understandably, as Thomas (2000) says, DSS offices are under-funded and have far fewer financial resources than the university admissions offices, so they probably have to limit their spending on publications and outreach.

Based on this study's findings, it appears that some universities may have some misconceptions about prospective students with disabilities. First, some universities seem to forget they exist. They don't acknowledge them in any aspect of their materials. This may be due to ignorance or misunderstanding about the nature of disability. There may be a false assumption that someone with a disability can't compete in college, or there may be fear that the university isn't as accessible as it should be and it might open itself up to lawsuits. Secondly, those universities that do have some disability awareness still are not going to too much effort to recruit students with disabilities, as they might for a student from an ethnic minority. With this behavior, universities may be missing out on many excellent students with disabilities who might enroll there.

Therefore, this researcher has several recommendations for universities based on this study. First, admissions offices need to get people with disabilities' requests for information into the hands of campus DSS offices. In that way, prospective students will get information they need to see if the campus provides the services and access they require. Admissions offices would also be well served by an employee who is a liaison to the DSS office, or by a DSS employee who works with admissions to attend recruitment events. For example, if a recruitment event has 400 in attendance, almost 40 people may have questions about disability or campus accessibility based on statistics that 9 percent of college students have a disability. On many campuses, DSS and admissions offices are in very separate departments that have no interaction, which seems to result in little disability information getting into recruitment materials. If about 10 percent of college students have some kind of disability, they represent a significant group who deserves particular consideration.

In connection with this, admissions offices and DSS offices need to partner to produce higher quality brochures and other materials for DSS offices. University admissions offices produce beautiful materials and they are aware of issues such as ethnic diversity. They need to extend that PR excellence into the area of disability awareness. For example, Towson University in Maryland has an attractive four-color brochure focused solely on cultural diversity, which discusses topics such as the African American Cultural Center and the International Education

Office on campus; however, its DSS office has no printed brochure. (The office does have a detailed web page that can be found through a search of the main university web page.)

At the national level a guidebook needs to be developed that would discuss DSS services at each U.S. college campus and their levels of disability friendliness. This would be an important resource for high school students with disabilities or any person with a disability thinking of attending college. In addition, it would gently put pressure on U.S. colleges to compete for good rankings in the guidebook, like they do for the other more general guidebooks such as from *U.S. News & World Report*. This guidebook also would benefit the image of people with disabilities because they would be seen as people with college potential. Obviously, not everyone with a disability can or wants to attend college, but the important underlying message of the guidebook would be that here's a group of potential students, who deserve to be recruited just like any other prospective student.

Finally, the findings from this analysis of university recruitment materials and DSS materials suggest that future research should be done to survey both admissions and DSS offices at universities. Admissions offices should be surveyed on their knowledge level about accessibility issues regarding disabled students and their understanding of disability rights laws. This type of survey might indicate any attitudinal barriers that exist within admissions office or the university in general. DSS offices should be surveyed about their resources, missions, and ability to promote themselves. Many DSS offices are so focused on providing services to students with disabilities that they do not know how to promote themselves to prospective students. If universities are ignorant about reaching out to future students with disabilities, that may say something about the campus climate for their current students with disabilities.

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Table 1. DIVERSITY IN IMAGES IN GENERAL UNIVERSITY MATERIALS

Student race/disability in photos	Number of materials (N=77)	Percentage
White	77	100%
Black/African American	74	96%
Asian	65	84%
Latino	59	77%
Disabled	17	22%

Table 2. TYPES OF DISABLED STUDENT SERVICES PUBLICATIONS

Format of publication*	Number** (N=30)	Percentage
3 ½ X 8 inch, 6-8 page brochures	19	63%
8 X 11, 2-pages	5	17
8 X 11, 4+ pages	3	10
4-color, 4 X 8 inch, 6-page brochure	1	3
3 ½ X 8 inch, 10-page brochure	1	3
43-page manual	1	3

* Most were not black and white but had some spot color.

** Some offices sent both brochures and 8x11 applications, but only the primary promotional/information brochure was counted.

Table 3. CONTENT OF DISABLED STUDENT SERVICES PUBLICATIONS

Mentions of Services/Disabilities	Number (N=30)	Percentage
DSS Office information	29	97%
Classroom accommodation	27	90
Learning disabilities	21	70
Assistive technology	20	67
Campus access	17	57
Physical disabilities	17	57
Deafness/hearing impairment	16	53
Blindness/visual impairment	14	47
Psychiatric/mental health	14	47
Personal attendant services	2	7

Religion &
media

The Economic Response of Religious Television Stations to Digital Implementation

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Abstract

A theoretical model of organizational behavior (Oliver, 1991) was applied to religious television stations in the U.S. to assess their economic responses to the digital television conversion. Results showed that religious stations are more likely to abandon or reduce operations, but have strong resistance toward selling and would like to explore new revenue opportunities. Because of this dilemma, religious broadcasters viewed the conversion as a burden, not a benefit.

The Economic Response of Religious Television Stations to Digital Implementation

Background

The general manager and president of two religious television stations in Florida has a serious problem. While one station is non-commercial and the other is commercial, both must comply with federal mandates to convert to digital broadcasting. The general manager estimated the cost of full-power digital conversion at around six million dollars, a figure he called "horrific." (Note: The names of managers and organizations have been withheld at the request of the research participants. Interviews took place in October 2001 and August 2002).

Because of high conversion costs, the stations will not go digital for at least a year. And while the organization could go with low-power digital conversion, it may still have to sell one station to pay for another. "We feel we are being forced to sell a valuable asset to settle for a non-commercial station," said the general manager. He added that his stations need to create new economic models, such as leasing unused spectrum space, but the financial reality of the situation has made that unlikely. "This is a real problem for religious stations."

As the manager indicated, religious stations across the U.S. have struggled with the issue of digital conversion. Unlike most media technologies, which develop from market forces and entrepreneurial ambition, digital television in the U.S. has the support of a government mandate. The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has ordered a general phase-in of digital television, whereby almost all stations in the country must have a digital signal on the air no later than 2003 (Thalheimer, 1998).

If the FCC sticks to its timetable, digital television will enter into a unique period in U.S. history. The American media landscape has changed drastically in the generation leading up to digital technology. Deregulation in the 1980s, which climaxed with the Telecommunications

Act of 1996, relaxed rules on media ownership. The result has been a tremendous increase in media mergers and consolidations, as larger companies continue to swallow up smaller ones. At the turn of the new century, the top 15 television operators accounted for 43% of total industry revenue, with that number projected to change to 10 companies controlling more than half of industry revenue within a few years (Mermigas, 1998a).

As media companies combine, their audiences have split. An explosion in program offerings and alternative channels has resulted in audience fragmentation and the development of smaller 'niche' audiences. A 1998 survey by Statistical Research Incorporated showed that the percentage of homes with more than 80 channels had doubled in just one year, while the number of homes with Internet access had doubled just since 1996 (Lafayette, 1998).

Another issue for industry executives is the tremendous cost of digital implementation. Depending on who crunches the numbers, digital conversion can cost between one and eight million dollars per station. According to a Forrester Research study, 24% of all stations will spend more than $6 million apiece on digital upgrades (Tedesco, 1997). The National Association of Broadcasters (NAB) says that by the end of the digital transition, the industry will have invested approximately $16 billion in equipment, design and manpower (Kapler, 1998).

Consolidation, fragmentation and escalating costs have combined to cast a shadow of doubt across the entire system of media economics. Chan-Olmstead wrote, "As the media industry continues to develop with sophisticated technologies … it renders current models of competition in mass media obsolete" (1997, pp. 39-40). A study from PricewatershouseCoopers revealed that digital television will require new business models, new programming models and more efficient systems (Mermigas, 1998b). But exactly what economic models and systems will support the untested technology remains a mystery to most station owners and industry executives. Said former FCC chairman William Kennard, "Nobody—nobody—can predict, with any degree of certainty how it's all going to work out" (West, 1998, p. S7).

That certainly could be said of religious broadcasters, who perhaps face even greater conversion obstacles than their secular counterparts. Certainly, financial restraints and economic conditions will play a major role.. As Armstrong (1979, p. 138) noted, "Christian programs and stations operate on budgets that seem impossibly low to other communication professionals."

Religious broadcasting has developed an economic model based mainly on viewer support, but with advertising growing in significance. Many religious broadcasters say this model will not survive the digital conversion, forcing many stations off the air or into consolidation (Schultz, 2000a). In addition, many religious stations are by definition non-commercial and non-profit. Executives at such stations are also different socially, politically and managerially than their secular counterparts. While economic realities are important to such broadcasters, evangelical and religious principles often take priority (Schultz, 2000b). This could complicate their responses to digital television.

A few years ago, FCC chairman Michael Powell called digital conversion "a potential train wreck. The government-mandated schedule will force broadcasters to spend billions before they have any inkling of what consumers prefer" (McConnell, 1998, p. 14). This study attempted to address this 'potential train wreck' and what religious broadcasters are doing to avoid a derailment. Specifically, it approached the economic future of U.S. religious television stations with this question: how will such stations react to digital conversion?

Theory and Hypotheses

The study attempted to answer this question primarily through the application of a theoretical model of organizational response (Oliver, 1991). It would be much simpler to make predictions based strictly on financial resources, but that may not be the most comprehensive method. Oliver argued that, "The likelihood that organizations will conform to institutional pressures is not exclusively dependent on the legitimacy or economic rationality anticipated by conformity (p. 165)."

Instead, Oliver described organizational behavior as a strategic response to institutional changes (such as the government-mandated conversion to digital television). In the face of change or institutional pressures, organizations react based on a variety of factors. Oliver developed a model that helped predict how organizations would handle and react to outside pressures. Such outside pressures must be viewed in terms of what is causing the pressure, which constituents are exerting the pressure, the content of the norms to which the organization is being pressured to conform, the means by which the pressure is exerted and the environmental context in which they occur (see Table 1).

For example, Oliver defined the cause of institutional pressures as "the rationale, set of expectations, or intended objectives that underlie external pressures for conformity (p. 161)." This cause is generally defined in terms of either legitimacy (social fitness) or efficiency (economic fitness). In terms of the cause, outside pressures can make the organization either more socially fit (such as laws regarding safety conditions) or more economically fit (such as laws that promote business efficiency).

In a similar vein, organizations depend on a variety of constituents. In the case of multiplicity, such constituencies are multiple and conflicting. The level of dependence organizations have on such constituencies also varies. For example, public television stations are highly dependent on both the government and private donors for funding. By contrast, commercial stations are more dependent on advertisers and the viewing public.

The content of the outside pressure is also important. Sometimes, such content is compatible with the internal goals of the organization. It could be argued that deregulation of ownership limits on television stations is compatible with business goals at those stations. If the organization believes the content is not compatible with internal goals, there is a higher level of constraints and a lower level of consistency. For example, many stations might view the legislative ban on cigarette advertising as a constraint.

The institutional factor of control refers to the level of sanction or coercion involved with the outside pressure. The threat of legal coercion or enforcement can be quite high, as in the case of digital television. The FCC has mandated the conversion, and stations that do not comply face the potential loss of their operating licenses. In some cases, control can be voluntary and less severe. This would apply to regulations and operating procedures of stations that belong to the National Religious Broadcasters (NRB). The NRB has rules and regulations for member stations, but compliance is mostly voluntary.

Finally, the context of the outside pressure can influence organizational behavior. There can be a high degree of environmental uncertainty in which the pressure takes place. This would refer to a situation in which business conditions cannot be accurately anticipated or predicted.

There is often a high degree of environmental uncertainty when new media technologies emerge, such as the chaotic early days of radio and television.

Based on these conditions, Oliver theorized that organizations will make specific strategic responses ranging from passivity to increasing active resistance. These responses include acquiescence, compromise, avoidance, defiance and manipulation. How the organization perceives the outside pressure for change will determine how it reacts. For example, if an organization feels like the outside pressure is socially legitimate and economically efficient, it should respond with high acquiescence and avoid strong resistance. However, if an organization has strong, conflicting, multiple constituencies, and the content is viewed as constraining rather than consistent, the reaction is more likely to be open defiance of the outside pressure.

This predictive model has direct application to television stations and the digital conversion. According to Oliver, acquiescence is defined as habit, imitation or compliance, which includes "unconscious or blind adherence to preconscious or taken-for-granted rules or values (p. 152)." This would correlate most closely to a station maintaining the economic status quo or improving its existing economic model.

But Oliver also noted, "Organizations may consider unqualified conformity unpalatable or unworkable" (p. 153). In these cases, compromise is a logical response. Oliver described compromise as "the thin wedge in organizational resistance to institutional pressures (p. 153)," which could be interpreted as developing new economic models or revenue streams. Avoidance, defined by Oliver as escape or exit from the domain within which the pressure is exerted, correlates most closely to selling the station, consolidation, or getting out of the industry.

Defiance and manipulation are not plausible courses of action, given the coercive power of the FCC and the threat of losing a station license for non-compliance.

Based on this model, it is possible to assign predictive factors to U.S. religious television stations (see Table 2). It is also possible to hypothesize how religious broadcasters will respond to digital conversion:

H_1: Religious stations are more likely than other categories of stations to abandon, or eliminate operations, including no planned changes or selling the station, as a response to digital conversion.

H_2: Religious stations are more likely than other categories of stations to perceive a lack of benefit in the digital conversion process.

H_3: Of those stations that perceive a lack of benefit in the digital conversion process, religious stations are more likely to try and avoid abandonment compared to other categories of stations.

There are stations that will undoubtedly view the digital conversion as lacking any benefit, and perhaps even consider it a detriment. This would seem a logical response of religious stations, given their limited resources. Thus, religious stations should be more likely to respond to digital conversion with active resistance.

These hypotheses reflected the current problems facing religious broadcasters. It was believed that regulatory and financial burdens have forced many religious broadcasters to considering selling, even though making such a choice was involuntary and would be aggressively resisted.

Methodology

A questionnaire was developed to test the predictive model and gauge the attitudes and behaviors of decision-making executives in the study. Most names, addresses, stations and station information used in the questionnaire sample were gathered from the 2001 *Broadcasting & Cable Yearbook.* When necessary information was missing, gaps were filled from TV station application information at the FCC, which keeps more detailed records than the *Broadcasting & Cable Yearbook.* Using these sources, a stratified sample of broadcasting executives was created. These executives included owners, presidents, managers or anyone else with ultimate decision-making power at the station. An nth-series method was used to build the sample, taking every fifth station from the industry listings. This method led to a total sample size of 330. The hypotheses were tested with a postal questionnaire in the fall of 2001. Originally, the questionnaires were designed as an electronic mail instrument, but a pilot test conducted in the spring of 2001 found low response rate problems with this method. Response was much better for a postal version of the pilot test; therefore, the researcher decided to conduct the survey by U.S. mail. The mailings were conducted in October 2001, and based on Dilliman's (2001) total design method, which emphasizes repeated contacts. Contacts included a pre-notification letter, the questionnaire and cover letter, and finally follow-ups by mail, phone and electronic mail.

It was decided to send questionnaires to executives at four major categories of U.S. television stations: religious, low-power, commercial and public. It was believed that this method would allow for a better comparison of religious broadcasters with other station groups.

Of the 330 initial contacts made, a total of 11 were refused or returned as undeliverable. This left 319 valid possible respondents, of which 104 actually returned a completed questionnaire, for a response rate of 32.6%. Response for the mailing may have suffered because of some unfortunate circumstances. Shortly after the first questionnaires went out, television newsrooms across the country began receiving the anthrax bacteria in the mail. Three people died, and traces of the bacteria were confirmed in mailings sent to NBC and CBS in New York. At least three television station representatives called the researcher and said questions about safety prompted them to have local law enforcement open the manila envelopes in which the questionnaires were mailed.

These developments had obvious implications for response rate and potential non-response error. As a result, the researcher conducted qualitative, in-depth, phone interviews with broadcasters representing all four station groups. These interviews were conducted in October 2001 and April 2002, and the results were used to supplement the quantitative data of the study.

Results

Data from the study supported previous literature, in that compared to other station groups, religious station respondents reported more obstacles associated with digital conversion. All station groups were asked to assess whether they could sustain revenue after the digital conversion (see Table 3). On a scale from one to seven, with one representing 'definitely will not sustain,' and seven representing 'definitely will sustain,' the mean for the religious group (2.76) was lower than low-power (2.90), public (3.39) and commercial (4.12) respondents. An analysis of variance (F = 2.85, df = 103, p = .04) indicated that this difference was statistically significant at the .05 level.

Similarly, when broadcasters were asked to make predictions about future revenue, religious stations were the most pessimistic (see Table 4). On a scale of one to seven, with one representing 'will decrease substantially,' and seven representing 'will increase substantially,' religious (4.29) executives reported lower mean scores than low-power (4.33), public (4.92) and commercial (5.00) respondents. Although an analysis of variance did not indicate statistical significance at the .05 level ($F = 2.42$, $df = 103$, $p = .07$), it still reflected the precarious financial position of many religious broadcasters.

Revenue concerns have caused many religious broadcasters to delay the digital conversion process (see Table 5). A higher percentage of religious broadcasters (60%) indicated plans to delay digital implementation longer than one year, compared to low-power (50%), public (48%) and commercial (21%) stations.

Thus, support for H_1 should not be surprising. Station executives were asked what specific economic changes they planned to make as a result of digital conversion (see Table 6). The proportion of religious stations that indicated plans to sell (9%) was higher than commercial stations (4%), public (0%) and low-power (0%) stations, leading to acceptance of H_1.

Data also indicated support for H_2, in that religious stations perceived a very low benefit to the digital conversion (see Table 7). Based on scaled responses, with one representing 'low benefits,' and seven representing 'high benefits,' religious stations (2.81) had lower mean responses than commercial (3.00), low-power (3.10) and public (5.91) respondents. An analysis of variance suggested this difference was statistically significant at the .05 level ($F = 30.24$, $df = 100$, $p < .001$), especially when comparing religious and public stations. This was further confirmed through qualitative data, such as interviews and responses to open-ended questions on the questionnaire. Some religious station respondents remarked that the conversion only benefited the government. One remarked, "Digital is being done only so the government can make more money."

According to the data, religious, low-power and commercial broadcasters see little benefit from the digital television conversion (see Table 7). Of these groups, it was hypothesized that religious broadcasters would be more willing to try and avoid abandonment, or selling the station (H_3). Respondents were asked the importance of maintaining control of the station (see Table 8). On a scale with one representing 'no importance of keeping control,' and seven representing 'extremely important to keep control,' religious broadcasters (6.05) expressed the highest desire to maintain control, compared to commercial (5.79), public (5.92) and low-power (4.11) respondents. Although an analysis of variance did not suggest statistical significance at the .05 level ($F = 2.53$, $df = 89$, $p = .06$), religious broadcasters were strongly inclined to maintain station control and avoid selling.

The hypothesis was further examined through correlation. Attitudes toward selling the station were correlated with those station groups that perceived low benefits from digital conversion (religious, commercial and low-power; see Table 9). The correlation indicated that religious broadcasters had the lowest desire to sell ($r = -.46$), when compared with commercial ($r = -.19$) and low-power ($r = -.15$) broadcasters, and that this difference was statistically significant at the .05 level ($r = -.46$, $r^2 = .21$, $p = .03$). Based on these data, H_3 was accepted.

Discussion

In that the data showed support for all three hypotheses, the Oliver model seems to have appropriate application for religious television stations and the digital conversion.

Religious broadcasters were more likely than other respondents to abandon or reduce operations (H_1), see no benefit from the digital conversion (H_2), and resist sale of the station (H_3). However, many of these choices appeared involuntary.

In terms of specific economic response to digital conversion, the majority of religious broadcasters (53%) expressed a desire to explore new revenue opportunities (see Table 6). But regulatory and financial constraints have put them in a situation where they are forced to abandon or reduce operations. This was reflected in several respondent comments. One religious station respondent said, "We are a missionary station. We don't have the resources to go digital." According to another, "We must pay more attention to things proven to work and spend less time on speculation. We are not yet ready to make changes."

This also fits Oliver's model in that organizations with low consistency are less likely to acquiesce or compromise. According to Oliver (1991, p. 154), "Defiance and manipulation strategies are predicted to occur most frequently when consistency is low. The organization may unilaterally dismiss or challenge [outside requirements]."

Those stations that are not selling or reducing operations, still face major obstacles in meeting conversion deadlines. The majority of religious broadcasters (60%) said it will take a year or longer to convert, which was a highest percentage of all responding groups (see Table 5). This type of delay also fits in with the Oliver model. According to Oliver (1991), "The lower the degree of social legitimacy [or] economic gain perceived to be attainable from conformity, the greater the likelihood of organizational resistance" (pp. 160-161).

Even if religious broadcasters had the resources to confront the digital conversion, the issue is further complicated by questions over revenue models. Many religious stations are still tied to the economic model of viewer donations, which may not improve with the advent of digital technology. A clearer picture or more program offerings does not necessarily translate into increased viewer support. As one religious station respondent wrote, "Viewer support and economic changes dictate our revenue stream, [not digital technology]." Another religious station respondent agreed, adding, "Today's younger generation is less likely to donate [than their parents]."

All of this fits in with Oliver's model. Regarding inconsistency, she wrote, "Organizations may also lack the capacity to conform when consistency is low. Both the willingness and ability of organizations to accept and conform to institutional rules or expectations may be circumscribed by a lack of consistency" (1991, p. 165).

Limitations

All of these findings must be considered within the context in which the study took place. Specifically, respondent concerns about environmental uncertainty, audience viewing patterns and worsening economy make their responses extremely volatile.

There was an overwhelming feeling of uncertainty among the respondents regarding the digital conversion. Typical of the responses was what one public station executive wrote, "Things are very uncertain. We still lack a successful [business] model." A commercial station responded added, "There is more expense, but we don't see any additional income."

It is also important to consider the economic time frame in which the study took place. The national economy showed consistent weakening throughout 2001, and when it showed signs of recovery, the terrorist attacks in September delivered another serious blow. "It will take [our station] many years to recover from September 11," wrote one public station respondent. The weak national economy had a trickle-down effect that hindered growth for many stations on the local level.

Thus, the results of this study could be considered only a "snapshot" of a particular moment within the evolving digital landscape. It is possible that changes in any of these factors could change the attitudes and responses of station executives regarding digital television.

Future Research

The limitations of the study suggest the need for investigation over a longer period of time. A useful approach might be investigating station response during several distinct time periods. For example, response could be measured before the digital conversion, shortly after the conversion, and then a period of years after the conversion. This would allow the researcher to account for volatility in the environment, such as the economy or government activity. It could also measure how respondents' attitudes and activities regarding digital television have changed over time. This would give the researcher a greater breadth of information regarding the actual impact of the digital conversion.

A more detailed study of individual stations groups might also provide more insight as to motivations for economic actions. This particular study focused more on the 'what' of specific economic response. A case study approach would take the investigation to the next logical step: 'why' do groups of stations (or even individual stations) make the economic responses they do? That would certainly provide more depth to the current study.

Conclusions

The results of this study paint a pessimistic picture of the future of religious television stations in the U.S. Most religious broadcasters do not want to sell or reduce operations, but have been forced to do so because of factors related to the digital conversion. Those stations that do remain on the air face significant problems in regards to conversion timetables and creating revenue.

Complicating these issues is the great uncertainty among broadcasters surrounding digital conversion. Even as the conversion deadline approaches, there is still confusion over programming options, technical standards, consumer acceptance, and most importantly, revenue opportunities. No one has yet advanced a proven model for recouping conversion costs and creating profit in the digital age. This is especially relevant for religious broadcasters, like the general manager of the two stations in Florida. "We are really struggling with this conversion," he said. There is no money to convert and I don't see any for several years. Am I missing something?"

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Table 1: Antecedents of strategic responses

Institutional Factor	Predictive Dimensions
Cause	Legitimacy or social fitness
	Efficiency or economic fitness
Constituents	Multiplicity of demands
	Dependence on constituents
Content	Consistency with group goals
	Constraints imposed on group
Control	Legal coercion or enforcement
	Voluntary diffusion of norms
Context	Environmental uncertainty
	Environmental interconnection

Source: Oliver, Christine. (1991). Strategic responses to institutional process. *Academy of Management Review, 16,* (1), 160.

Table 2: Strategic response model of U.S. television stations to digital conversion

Type of station	Predictive factors	Strategic response
Commercial	Low legitimacy Low dependence Low consistency High uncertainty	Developing new economic models or revenue streams
Public	Moderate legitimacy Moderate dependence Moderate consistency Moderate uncertainty	Improving existing economic models
Religious	Low legitimacy Low dependence High inconsistency High uncertainty	Reducing or eliminating operations
LPTV	Low legitimacy Low dependence High inconsistency High uncertainty	Reducing or eliminating operations

Table 3: Whether stations can sustain revenue after the digital transfer

Responding group	N	SD	Mean
Religious	21	1.76	2.76
LPTV	10	1.66	2.90
Public	49	1.67	3.39
Commercial	24	1.57	4.12

Responding group	Compared to	Mean difference
Religious	Commercial	-1.36
	Low-power	-0.14
	Public	-0.63

Note: Although the ANOVA suggested a statistical difference, a Scheffe test failed to identify statistical differences between the means at the .05 level.

N = 104

F = 2.85, df = 103, p = .04

Table 4: Station prediction of primary revenue source

Responding group	N	SD	Mean
Religious	21	1.52	4.29
Public	49	0.99	4.33
Commercial	24	0.97	4.92
LPTV	10	1.05	5.00

Note: Responses ranged from 'one' meaning 'will decrease substantially' to 'seven' meaning 'will increase substantially.'

N = 104

F = 2.42, df = 103, p = .07

Table 5: Timetables for stations to convert to digital technology

Response	Commercial	Religious	LPTV	Public	Totals
	Responding group by percentages				
Already digital	4	5	0	18	11
Within next 6 months	25	5	10	18	17
Up to one year	50	30	40	16	29
Longer than one year	21	60	50	48	43
Totals	100	100	100	100	100

Note: Percentages rounded to the nearest whole number.

N = 103

Table 6: Planned economic changes as a result of digital conversion

Response	Responding group by percentages				
	Commercial	Religious	LPTV	Public	Totals
Improve existing model	25	19	10	33	27
New revenue choices	54	53	50	61	58
Sell station	4	9	0	0	3
No changes	13	14	30	2	10
Other	4	5	10	4	5
Totals	100	100	100	100	100

Note: Percentages rounded to nearest whole number.

N = 103

Table 7: Station perception of digital benefit

Responding group	N	SD	Mean
Public	47	1.19	5.91
LPTV	10	2.18	3.10
Commercial	23	1.57	3.00
Religious	21	1.94	2.81

Responding group	Compared to	Mean difference
Religious	Public	-3.10*
	LPTV	-0.29
	Commercial	-0.19

Note: * indicates difference is significant at .05 level according to Scheffe test. Responses ranged from 'one' representing low benefit to 'seven' representing high benefit.

N = 101

F = 30.24, df = 100, p < .001

Table 8: Importance of maintaining station control

Responding group	N	SD	Mean
Religious	20	1.50	6.05
Commercial	23	1.57	5.79
Public	38	2.03	5.92
LPTV	9	2.67	4.11

Note: Responses ranged from 'one' representing no importance of keeping control to 'seven' representing extremely important to keep control.

N = 90

F = 2.53, df = 89, p = .06

Table 9: Correlation between perception of benefit and attitude toward selling among stations that perceived low benefits

Responding group	N	r	r^2	p
Religious	21	-.46	.21	.03*
Commercial	23	-.19	.04	.36
Low-power	10	-.15	.02	.69

Note: *indicates difference was statistically significant at the .05 level. Public stations were not included because their perception was categorized as 'high benefit' (see Table 7).

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